Mixtec Writing and Society

Jansen, M.E.R.G.N.; Van Broekhoven, L.N.K.

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Escritura de Ñuu Dzaui

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Edited by Maarten E.R.G.N. Jansen and Laura N.K. van Broekhoven

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Maarten E.R.G.N. Jansen and Laura N.K. van Broekhoven

Introduction

In 2005 the Royal Netherlands Academy of Arts and Sciences sponsored an international colloquium 'Mixtec writing: historical development and social context', held at its seat, the magnificent historical mansion *Het Trippenhui*s (Kloveniersburgwal 29), in Amsterdam. This colloquium was conceived as a forum for presenting, discussing and contextualizing the recent results of research projects concerning the culture, history and language of the Mixtec people or Ñuu Dzaui, 'Nation of the Rain', in Southern Mexico, particularly its original ancient writing systems and on-going literary tradition. Additional support was given by the CNWS Research School of Asian, African and Amerindian Studies and the Faculty of Archaeology (Leiden University), as well as by the Leiden University Fund and the National Museum of Ethnology (Leiden). Researchers from different countries and backgrounds were invited, including, of course, various Mixtec scholars. Several PhD candidates and selected MA students from Leiden University attended as well.

The topic of the meeting corresponds to the core of two research programs carried out at Leiden University and financed by the Netherlands Foundation for Scientific Research (NWO): 'Mixtec City-States: nature and development of indigenous socio-political organization and 'Sahìn Sàu, an Endangered Language of Southern Mexico'.

At present, the Mixtec language (Dzaha Dzaui) is spoken by more than 400.000 people, living in the Western part of the Mexican State of Oaxaca and neighboring areas in the States of Puebla and Guerrero, as well as in many other places where Mixtecs have migrated to in the past decades (Mexico City, the North-West of Mexico, and different areas in the USA, mainly the West coast). The Mixtec home territory, Ñuu Dzaui, is traditionally divided into three subregions:

1. the Mixtec Highlands (*Mixteca Alta*), a mountainous region, generally above 2000 meters above sea level, situated in the Mid-Western part of the Mexican State of Oaxaca, originally with an extension into the Valley of Oaxaca (around the town of Cuilapan),
2. the Mixtec Lowlands (*Mixteca Baja*), a still quite mountainous area, but of considerably less altitude, and therefore generally quite hot and eroded, situated in the Western part of the State of Oaxaca and neighboring areas of the States of Puebla and Guerrero,

3. the Mixtec Coast (Mixteca de la Costa), hot tropical lowlands bordering on the Pacific Ocean in the States of Oaxaca and Guerrero.

Mixtec civilization originated probably in the second millennium BC. and started an impressive development during the periods known as the 'Late Preclassic' (approx. 500 BC – AD 200) and the 'Classic' (AD 200-900) to archaeologists. During that time settlements became more permanent and complex. In other words, a process of urbanization and state formation took place. More and more ceremonial centers were constructed, consisting of plazas, pyramids and decorated tombs, with works of visual art, such as carved stones, paintings, and figurative ceramics ('urns'). This development is parallelled in the writing system. From incidental petroglyphs and rock paintings in rock shelters at specific locales in the landscape, a tradition of inscriptions arose. First we find only a few calendrical signs, such as the ones that accompany the carving of a lizard on the corner of a large platform in Huamelulpan, maybe representing the names of important persons (ancestors) or significant dates, but in any case imbued with special commemorative meaning. As the ceremonial centers grow, more complex statements on stone present themselves, generally referring to enthronements of rulers, conquests, and rituals. Influences from the great Zapotec acropolis Monte Albán near the present-day city of Oaxaca are clearly manifest. Very important is the Ñuiñe style and iconography (AD 400–800), particularly well documented in the Mixteca Baja. Appropiately, many inscriptions have a religious connotation, often depictting the individuals in their *nahual* aspect, i.e. in the guise of the animals that were their *alter ego* in nature.

After an interruption and crisis at the end of the Classic, Mixtec culture revived and reached new heights during the Postclassic (AD 900–1521). Among the hallmarks of this cultural prosperity was the production of pictorial manuscripts, basically in two forms: the screenfold book (*codex*) of deerskin or paper, and the painted cotton cloth (*lienzo*). The writing system differed notably from the earlier Ñuiñe style and iconography. It was a sophisticated and flamboyant form of pictography, showing clear influences from Central Mexican artistic and semiotic conventions (which appear already fully developed and codified in the frescoes of the Classic metropolis Teotihuacan). The codices and lienzos contain long narratives about the history and religious practices of the 'city-states', or rather 'village-states' (called *yuvui tayu*, 'mat and throne', in Dzaha Dzaui), that made up the political landscape of precolonial times. The origin and genealogical relationships of the ruling dynasties of these polities are referred to in detail, while occassionally the paintings record royal dramas of Shakespearean quality.

Continuing the research and publication project of Ferdinand Anders (University of Vienna), Maarten Jansen and Gabina Aurora Pérez Jiménez at Leiden University developed a specialized line of study, aiming at the interpretation of the Mixtec codices and related works of art, analyzing both the historical sources and the contemporary oral traditions.

Recently, they proposed a new set of names for the most important manuscripts, more in accordance with their cultural and linguistic origin:

– 'Codex Bodley 2858' (*MS. Mex. d. 1*, Bodleiean Library, Oxford) becomes *Codex Ñuu Tnoo – Ndisi Nuu* (because its contents deal with the dynasties of these two polities, also known with their Nahuatl names Tilantongo and Tlaxiaco respectively).
– 'Codex Selden 3135 (*Ms. Arch. Selden A.2*, Bodleian library, Oxford) becomes *Codex Añute* (because this is clearly its place of origin, also known with its Nahuatl name: Jaltepec).
– 'Codex Vindobonensis Mexicanus 1' (Österreichische Nationalbibliothek, Vienna) becomes *Codex Yuta Tnoho* (because its contents deal with the origin of the dynasties from the sacred ceiba tree in Yuta Tnoho, also known with its Nahuatl name Apoala).
– 'Codex Zouche-Nuttall' (British Museum, London) becomes *Codex Tonindeye* (after the Dzaha Dzaui term for 'lineage history').
– 'Codex Colombino-Becker' (Biblioteca Nacional de Antropología, Mexico City, and Museum für Völkerkunde, Vienna) becomes *Codex Iya Nacuaa* (after the calendar name of its protagonist: Lord 8 Deer)
– 'Códice Sánchez Solís' or 'Codex Egerton 2895' (British Museum, London) becomes *Codex Ñuu Ñaña* (after its place of origin, also known with its Nahuatl name Cuyotepeji).

After the Spanish conquest (1521), the colonial administrators and missionaries introduced the alphabet, which became widely used to write the indigenous languages, also *Dzaha Dzaui* (Mixtec). The Dominican friars Antonio de los Reyes and Francisco de Alvarado published a detailed grammar and a huge vocabulary (1593). Their works are the correlate of the magnificent, but now mostly ruined convents and churches of the 16th century. The ruling families of the village-states received some official recognition as rural nobility, the *caciques*, who were used by the Crown as a form of 'indirect rule'. Surviving documents in Mixtec, such as testaments, lawsuits, financial reports or *doctrinas*, give a good idea of the socio-political and religious situation in the colonized communities.

Since Mexican Independence (1821), the nationalist ideology of homogenization caused stagnation in the writing of the Mixtec language, which paralleled the definitive dissolution of the ancient cacicazgos. Occasionally, the Mixtec language was studied by local linguists and historians. In the 20th and 21st centuries a condition of 'internal colonialism' is still prevailing; in which marginalization, exploitation, discrimination and migration characterize the life situation in rural areas. Most texts, wordlists and linguistic studies were produced by protestant evangelists of the Summer Institute of Linguistics (USA), aiming at translating the Bible into as many indigenous languages and dialectical variants as possible. Sometimes anthropologists registered specimens of

oral literature. Critical voices caused the national education system to pay some attention to the Mesoamerican languages, resulting in the publication of some *cartillas* and simple text books.

During the past decades, however, Mixtecs themselves have become increasingly interested in their cultural and linguistic heritage and active in studying and writing their language, as well in producing new literary and artistic works (poetry, cinema etc.).

A primary aim of the academy colloquium in Amsterdam was to review and refine our knowledge of this long-term development, particularly to identify and interpret the changes and continuities in the themes and forms of written expression and related visual art. Our focus is on what type of information the Ñuu Dzaui or Mixtec nation registered during the past two millennia, and how the resulting texts reflect important aspects of its society and worldview, as well as its relationships with neighboring peoples.

This study makes us engage in an intercultural encounter. On the one hand, most researchers of these topics until now have been foreign to the Mixtec world. Mixtec students and scholars, on the other, have to deal with the fact that most interpretations of their culture history are constructed within alien frameworks, and that many changes have occurred over time, which make a direct connection to past phases of their culture problematic.

To create a more profound theoretical reflection on this intercultural aspect of our research, the colloquium (August 31-September 2) was preceded by an introductory masterclass on the '*Representation of Ancient Cultures and Indigenous Peoples*' (August 29-30).

This volume assembles most of the papers presented or circulated at both the masterclass and the colloquium, in such a way that the topics and foci of the individual contributions connect well with each other and constitute a coherent and continuous text. Reflecting the original organization of the meeting, the first section discusses in a more general sense the issue of intercultural analysis and representation, while the second presents the development of Mixtec writing and its social context.

Part I, '*Representation of Native American Peoples*', deals with the ways in which our data and interpretations are constructed. Often the images resulting from scholarly work reflect specific standpoints. In the case of indigenous peoples, an important problem is the colonial bias and its on-going presence in modern stereotypes and pre-understandings. Here historical traumas and ethical issues have epistemological implications, as discriminatory prejudices and hostile images of 'the other' impede intercultural communication.

This brings us to a discussion of the most impacting of representational media: cinema. Today, archaeological and anthropological documentaries, but also fiction movies, determine to a large extent how a worldwide audience is informed about different cultures in past and present. At the same time, Native American authors do not longer limit themselves to the spoken or written word, but increasingly make use of visual media such as film.

One of the results of the Leiden research program is the movie *El Rebozo de mi Madre* (directed by Itandehui Jansen 2005), which gives a lively portrait of present-day Mixtec society and includes several interviews in the Mixtec language. On the one hand this work may be seen as an ethnographic documentary, on the other it is a Mixtec creative product. It was shown at the masterclass and commented upon by several participants. In our experience, the visual medium, with its own particular strengths, makes a specific contribution to an interpretive enterprise, having not only an effect on the presentation of its outcome, but also on the very way research is conducted. The (re)telling of Mixtec narratives, for example, may contribute significantly to the appreciation of cultural values as well as to the understanding of ancient texts. An earlier, shorter movie by the same director, *Ocho Venado y Seis Mono* (1997), has similar characteristics and offers a reconstruction of the dramatic story told by the precolonial Mixtec codices. The Mixtec script, together with a Spanish translation is included in this volume (see the contribution by Gabina Aurora Pérez Jiménez).

In '*Speaking For Absent Subjects: Responsibility In Archaeological Discourse*', Rosemary Joyce observes that most archaeologists have taken for granted the reality that their interpretations give voice to the lives of otherwise silent people in the past. The criteria that archaeologists employ to judge which interpretations are better have focused on issues of evidence and inference, whether a particular statement is plausible to practitioners of archaeological research. Many archaeologists now acknowledge that there can be additional perspectives, especially of descendant communities, but discussion of the multiplicity of representations has for the most part involved a kind of compartmentalization, in which traditional archaeological representations remain most valued, and other representations directed at a 'public' are added on. The results may be incoherent, or may seem to open the door to complete relativism in which all representations are in some sense equally good – even those that deprive descendant communities of their own history by attributing actions to supernatural, non-local, or alien agencies. Thus archaeologists have a new responsibility: to speak for the congruence of evidence and interpretation in ways that do not foreclose multiplicity but that support the recovery of voice by those for whom the materials we examine are the material of history.

Franci Taylor's contribution '*Discovering 'The' American Indian*' looks at North America and discusses the over-representation of Native American peoples by the dominant group, particularly the Hollywood stereotype. Taylor discusses a number of fundamental aspects that characterize the situation of native peoples not only in the US. but also in Mexico. Analyzing issues of representation in the US. film industry she provides us with useful concepts and tools that may be generally applied and are certainly relevant when looking at the Mexican correlates. From earliest contact, European and Amer-European literary production has created a disempowering image of the indigenous peoples of the Americas as the cultural 'other.' With the advent of the motion picture and television genre Hollywood elaborated this false and negative American Indian image to demonstrate a justification for the policies of Manifest Destiny and total subjugation or

extermination of the indigenous populations of North America. The negative impact of this stereotyping within the mass media continues to negatively impact American Indian communities and children in the Twenty-first Century. American Indian children are virtually bombarded with images of their culture in terms of disenfranchised subservient woman and violent aggressive males. Through this distorted lens there is created a negative perception of indigenous ceremony, life and worldviews. There is also created a direct interconnectedness between the mass media's presentations and the disempowering 'colonial present' that negatively impacts indigenous communities, children, and the ability to find success. To provide some insights into the creation, perpetuation of, and damage caused by the Indian stereotype, Taylor investigates some of the origins of the term 'Indian' and the stereotypic ignoble savage icon, discusses how the American mass media has perpetuated this stereotype, and examines some of the ramifications of this stereotype on American Indian people today.

Peter Verstraten focuses in his '*Representation as process: a film of the /cloud/*' on what film analysis can teach us about what is at stake in the disciplines that study the past and other cultures (archaeology and anthropology). Discussing scenes from *Bram Stoker's Dracula*, Verstraten draws attention to the 'parasitic', even 'vampirical', aspects of these sciences. Going further, he demonstrates the oscillation and connection between life and death in the meditative archaeology-focused 'road movie' *Viaggio à Italia* and observes how film, as it moves forward in time, is never only something frozen from the past. Nurtured by these examples, and by Fabian's work on how anthropology constructs its object, Verstraten explores the problem of how representations of 'the Other' tend to remain limited to a parasitical process. The documentary *El Rebozo de mi Madre* also addresses this issue, in a conscious self-reflexive way. As a kind of melting pot of viewpoints of different persons from the Mixtec village, including the filmmaker and her parents, the movie follows a meandering structure, and makes use of stylistic devices such as clouds to acknowledge explicitly that there are limits to represent the life in a Mixtec village as it has been and as it is now.

In '*Practicing Ñuu Sau Poetics in Independent Transnational Cinema*', Itandehui Jansen gives her own viewpoint on the same movie, *El Rebozo de mi Madre*, which she directed in the context of a Leiden research project. She provides background information about the creative process, but also about the challenges of this genre in general. In particular she analyzes the theoretical aspects and the practical consequences of the search for alternative poetics, involving the production process as well as the issues of representation, address and cultural pluriformity.

After the discussion of the movie has brought us to a contemporary Mixtec community, Part II of our volume, '*Ñuu Dzaui Writing through Time*', focuses on the historical development and social context of native historiography and poetics in Southern Mexico. The different contributions follow a chronological order, moving from archaeological and iconographical data, including the Mixtec pictorial manuscripts, to the documents from the colonial period and from there to the living oral tradition of today.

In a diachronic study '*Four Thousand Years of Graphic Communication in the Mixteca-Tlapaneca-Nahua Region*', Gerardo Gutiérrez Mendoza reviews the evolution of ancient communication systems in Eastern Guerrero, beginning with early forms of dissemination in the Late Archaic/Early Formative period at Piedra Pinta-Totomixtlahuaca and the Cuaudzidziqui rock shelter. Evidence of Olmec style murals in this area, in which standardized codes were developed in consonance with Olmec ideology of the Gulf Coast of Mexico and Chalcatzingo, indicate the integration of Eastern Guerrero into the broader pan-Mesoamerican iconographic tradition. During the Classic/Epiclassic periods (AD 300-1100) – at present still difficult to define with chronological precision – two writing systems appear to have merged: one related to the Zapotec script of central Oaxaca and the other to Xochicalco in the Morelos Valley. In the Postclassic and early Colonial periods, we find a fully developed system, for example in the Códices of Azoyú, which shows a closer relationship to the writing tradition of Central Mexico than to the neighboring Mixteca Alta region of Oaxaca.

Gutiérrez examines the development of communication systems in Eastern Guerrero from both a methodological and a broad cultural perspective, evaluating the ability of communication media to fulfill social goals and the needs of emerging, and later, well-developed ruling lineages. Such 'communications' were likely modified, resulting in rich palimpsests with multiple meanings reflecting the interests of regional rulers at various moments in history. Indeed, the main conclusion to be derived from this analysis may be that Mesoamerican scribes utilized the same material support, i.e. 'channel' of communication, over and over again, altering the 'original' meaning and intention of the messages. Thus, he concludes, it is the channel itself, and not the message, that transcends time.

Moving to the Mixteca Baja and Alta in the State of Oaxaca, Iván Rivera gives a detailed análisis of the early development of Mixtec writing in his paper '*Los inicios de la escritura en la Mixteca'* (The beginnings of writing in the Mixtec region), discussing in-depth the Mixtec epigraphy that antecedes the Postclassic pictorial manuscripts. Recent archaeological investigations permit a better study of the little-known graphic system from Western Oaxaca: the Ñuiñe script. Although it has not yet been deciphered completely, significant patterns in its elements show that it is a form of pictography and that the texts contain year dates, calendrical names of persons, and likely historical narratives. Rivera analyzes a number of examples, clarifying the development of this form of writing between AD 400 and 800, and offering a number of innovative ideas about the themes and discourses registered in the monuments.

In '*An Ancient Story of Creation from San Pedro Jaltepetongo*', Javier Urcid deciphers a relatively long Classic Mixtec pictorial text, painted on the walls of Tomb 1 at Jaltepetongo (State of Oaxaca). These murals are shown to have important stylistic and calendrical affiliations to the Classic (Ñuiñe) script and to refer to the story of creation as known from the famous K'iche' sacred scripture, the Popol Vuh from Guatemala (an Early Colonial alphabetic document, which presumably reproduces the contents of a

precolonial hieroglyphic text). In addition, the quadripartite structure of the narrative and its associated trees, birds, deities, and cardinal directions, bears similarities to Mesoamerican cosmograms, contained in various codices and other works of art.

Turning to the pictographic manuscripts, Maarten Jansen's essay, entitled '*Social and Religious Concepts in Ñuu Dzaui Visual Art*', uses the documentary *El Rebozo de mi Madre* as point of departure for the identification and discussion of some central themes in ancient Mixtec writing. Several aspects of contemporary Mixtec society and mentality that appear in the movie have parallels in the worldview expressed in the codices of the Postclassic and Early Colonial periods, as well as in Classic and Preclassic inscriptions. By focusing on the relations between the past and the present, we may gain a better understanding of the precolonial narratives and symbols, especially where conceptualizations of place, time, and rulership are concerned.

Gabina Aurora Pérez Jiménez presents in her contribution '*Leyendo los Códices en Sahin Sau*' (Reading the Codices in Mixtec) some basics for deciphering and understanding the pictorial texts in the Mixtec language. After discussing some important terms and concepts, as well as the style of the ceremonial discourse (*shahu*), she offers a reconstruction of a central chapter in these precolonial books, the one dealing with the biography of the great ruler Lord 8 Deer 'Jaguar Claw' (AD 1063-1115). Synthesizing the interpretive breakthroughs that led her to this reconstruction, and stressing the coherence between distinct versions in the sources and the literary character of these accounts, she presents a short reading of the story in Sahin Sau, i.e. Mixtec as spoken today in Chalcatongo, with a Spanish translation. This text was originally used as script for the short movie *Ocho Venado y Seis Mono* directed by Itandehui Jansen (1997).

Arthur Joyce, Andrew Workinger, Byron Hamann and Marc Levine explore the link between the famous narrative about Lord 8 Deer and archaeological remains in their collective paper '*The Archaeology and Codical History of Tututepec*'**.** The city-state of Tututepec (Yucu Dzaa) has long been known from ethnohistoric sources as a powerful Late Postclassic imperial center. Until recently, however, little has been known of the archaeology of the site with its very location a subject of debate. The authors of this article discuss the founding, extent, chronology, and aspects of the internal organization and external relations of Tututepec based on the results of a regional survey, excavations, and a reanalysis of the Mixtec codices. They argue that Tututepec was founded early in the Late Postclassic period when the region was vulnerable to conquest due to political fragmentation and unrest. Indigenous historical data from three Mixtec codices narrate the founding of Tututepec as part of the heroic history of Lord 8 Deer 'Jaguar Claw.' According to these texts, Lord 8 Deer founded Tututepec through a creative combination of traditional Mixtec foundation rites and a strategic alliance with a highland group linked to the Tolteca-Chichimeca. Archaeological and ethnohistoric evidence indicate that Tututepec continued to expand through the Late Postclassic, growing to 21.85 km^2, and at its peak was the capital of an empire extending over 25,000 km^2.

An equally important archaeological exploration of a Postclassic site is directed by Ronald Spores. The results of the work in 2004–2005 are reported by Spores in the chapter 'Excavations at Yucundaa, Pueblo Viejo de Teposcolula'. It gives a preliminary overview of the layout of the urban enter and offers a first interpretation in terms of ancient Mixtec socio-economic structure. Discussing the population history of the site, attention is paid to the Early Colonial contacts with the Dominican monks, who left important traces of their presence in the form of an early monastery and church with related artefacts. This archaeological project provides a magnificent material context for the Postclassic codices. Furthermore, the 'Pueblo Viejo' de Teposcolula was abandoned around 1550 and refounded in the valley where the present town is still located. There it would become the administrative center (Alcaldía Mayor) for most of the Mixteca Alta during the colonial period, and the site of an important Dominican convent, where the monks produced the main grammar and vocabulary of the Mixtec language in the 16th century. The excavations have continued since this report and yielded more important finds.

The paper '*Feasting, Community and Codex Style Ceramics*' by Gilda Hernández Sánchez connects the concerns of archaeology and iconography in an interpretive study of the decoration of codex-style ceramics, dating from the Late Postclassic period (AD 1250-1521), and found in several sites in the state of Oaxaca, as well as in the states of Puebla, Tlaxcala, Veracruz, and Mexico. The author proposes that many of these vessels were used as serving dishes in feasting, that is, ritualized banquets where food was a prime medium of social interaction and symbolic expression. The painted images may be read as abbreviated texts hinging on concepts that were meaningful in the context of such ceremonies. Obviously, they are related to ceremonial discourse. Showing how some of the most common depictions represent preciousness, invocation of divine forces, contact with the divinity, and piety, Hernández Sánchez demonstrates how the iconological analysis of these representations offers an opportunity to understand the nature of feasts and ceremonial discourses in ancient Mesoamerican communities.

Bringing us to the time of Mixtec-Aztec interaction, Juan José Batalla Rosado discusses in his article on '*Un Glifo de la Tradición escrituraria Mixteca: el signo 'cerro' con doble voluta*' (A glyph of the Mixtec writing tradition: the sign 'mountain' with double volute) an example of how different Mesoamerican writing systems can be distinguished according to specific details in the form of certain glyphs. Characteristic of Mixtec writing, for example, is the representation of the sign for 'mountain', which uses a double volute to indicate 'stone', i.e. the stony character of the mountain. The writing systems from Central Mexico, on the contrary, use a triple volute or none at all.

After presenting a range of precolonial and early colonial examples of this phenomenon, Batalla Rosado examines two specific cases. In the Matrícula de Tributos, a precolonial document from Central Mexico, six different scribes are identified, of whom one belongs to the Mixtec tradition, using the convention of the 'mountain with double volute'. Furthermore, the Manuscript Aubin nº 20, a Mixtec pictorial manuscript, con-

tains a number of 'irregularities' in its signs and images, which suggest that it was painted much later than generally supposed, maybe even as late as the middle of the 18th century. This does not detract from its value, of course, as it probably was a copy of an ancient document.

The following two chapters draw our attention to the still little explored archival treasures from the colonial period, especially the documents in indigenous languages and / or full of Mesoamerican concepts and terminology.

In '*Spanish Conquest and Mesoamerican Mentality*' Angeles Romero compares the Zapotec primordial title 'Memoria de Juquila', probably dating from the early 17th century with the precolonial Mixtec Codex Yuta Tnoho ('Vindobonensis'), a sacred pictographic text, which refers to the origin of the kingdoms and their ruling dynasties in symbolic terms according to the cyclical Mesomerican worldview. The author addresses two important questions: 1) how did the indigenous peoples of Mesoamerica see and interpret the Spanish conquest? And 2) how did the conquest influence their view on history and how is this influence manifest in indigenous colonial documents? Romero's in-depth analysis proves that, although the actors changed the structure of the documents and the worldview expressed in them did not. The Mesoamerican view on history incorporated the conquest by interpreting it as the beginning of a new age or cycle.

In another study of colonial indigenous writing, '*Multilingualism in the Tocuij Ñudzavui Region*', Michael Swanton combines linguistic, philological and historical approaches, to document and clarify the phenomenon of long-term and wide-spread language interaction and multilingualism in the border areas between Mixtec and Ngiwa (Chochon). Examining details in the surviving sources, the author also identifies many aspects of traditional culture, social organization and daily life in indigenous communities during the colonial period.

Given this richness and importance of the historical documents, the conservation and study of the colonial and republican local archives is of obvious importance to indigenous communities and essential for the reconstruction and revalorization of local culture history. Roberto Santos Pérez describes this process in his article *El Archivo Histórico de Tlaxiaco y el Papel de las Comunidades Indígenas en la Recuperación de su Historia*' (The historical archive of Tlaxiaco and the role of the indigenous communities in the recuperation of their history), sketching the developments that enabled the preservation and recent establishment of the Archivo Histórico Municipal de la Ciudad de Tlaxiaco, and emphasizing the importance of good information campaigns for involving local citizens.

Along the same lines Juan Julián Caballero explains in his '*The Mixtec Language in the Globalization Era: Challenges and Struggles*' how in the past two decades a group of Ñuu Savi (Mixtec) intellectuals started to examine critically the impact of the colonization on various aspects of culture history but fundamentally on *Tu'un Savi*, the Mixtec language. These reflections led to a vision, a position and a proposal defined from within Mixtec culture as a means to recover and develop the life ways of the Mixtec people. A concrete result was the creation of the Ve'e Tu'un Savi, A.C., the 'Academy for the

Mixtec Language', in l997. This intellectual community now serves as a space for meetings and gatherings for those who speak the same language have the same world vision and share the same history negated by others. Basically, it constitutes a forum where the establishment of norms for writing and the preservation, maintenance and development of Tu'un Savi can take place, inother words a space in which projects may be generated that permit the documentation and development of the diverse knowledge of the Mixtec people, e.g. astronomy, religion, history, medicine, linguistics and literature. Notable progress has been achieved through the organization of workshops, meetings, congresses and seminars.

The combinations of signs on Postclassic ceramics studied by Hernández Sánchez seem, at least partially, be related to the use of formal discourse at ritual events. Ubaldo López García examines precisely this phenomenon in his contribution '*Sa'vi, el Lenguaje Ceremonial*' (*Sa'vi,* the ceremonial language). Describing the present-day usage of this special idiom, rich in metaphors, parallelisms, and *difrasismos*, during various important occasions in the village of Apoala in the Mixtec Highlands, López García identifies and analyzes a number of crucial expressions. These forms of figurative speech are beautiful examples of living oral literature and at the same time contain terms of crucial importance for understanding the ancient pictorial writings.

Memory is the key word of the actual transmission of the millennial culture and tradition that we find in the Mixtec Highlands. It is through the vital memory, transmitted by oral histories that the important representatives of Mixtec culture, such as the *curanderos*, are passing on the native vision on the human being, the world and the divine. Here we find the histories of the so-called invisible religion, the central symbols that make possible the experience and inner perception of cultural identity, of society and established order, known as the 'Mixtec world'. Living for three years in the town of Chalcatongo in the Mixtec Highlands, working with Mixtec people as a representative of the Catholic Church, Hans-Jörg Witter discovered the force of the indigenous, religious oral tradition. Now, in his article '*Koo Sau – Quetzalcoatl: Mixtec Religious Symbolism in Past and Present*', based on the theological analysis of ancient codices and the contemporary texts he collected in Chalcatongo, he describes the continuous importance of a central symbol of this culture: the Plumed Serpent. In elucidating this figure, the author also deals in detail with ritual life and the *nahual* experience.

The literary essay '*Hacia una Poética Ñuu Savi*' (Toward a Ñuu Savi Poetics) by Mixtec poet Karlos Tachisavi closes this volume with his reflection on the role and situation of Mixtec creative writing in the face of crises and encroaching systems of oppression, stressing its great potential and vocation.

Indeed, Mixtec writing has an impressive history of more than 2000 years, during which it has expressed many aspects and concerns of the social reality in which it was produced, and, certainly, this history is not finished, but will develop further, in an effort to express and to overcome the many socio-economic and cultural challenges that the Ñuu Dzaui, People of the Rain, face today.

Part I Representation of Native American Peoples

Rosemary A. Joyce

Speaking For Absent Subjects
Responsibility In Archaeological Discourse

Archaeologists long took for granted the reality that our interpretations give voice to the lives of people in the past who usually were not able to register their own perspectives on their lives. The criteria that archaeologists employ to judge which interpretations are better have been tightly focused on issues of evidence and inference, that is, whether a particular statement is plausible to practitioners of archaeological research.

Archaeologists worldwide began to be confronted in the last decades of the twentieth century by other interested parties, especially descendant communities, who challenged the representations offered of their predecessors. Many archaeologists did acknowledge that there could be additional perspectives, from different standpoints. But discussion of the multiplicity of representations has often involved a kind of compartmentalization, in which traditional archaeological representations remain more highly valued, and other representations directed at a 'public' are added on.

Critics of even such limited pluralism are quick to suggest that the results may be incoherent, as different groups use the same material as evidence of contradictory arguments that can no longer be decided simply by appeals to archaeological authority. The real danger exists that such an unconstrained openness of interpretation may open the door to complete relativism in which all representations are in some sense equally good – even those that deprive descendant communities of their own history by attributing actions to supernatural, non-local, or alien agencies.

In *The Languages of Archaeology* (Joyce 2002) I draw on the work of Mikhail Bakhtin (1981, 1984, 1986, 1990, 1993) to suggest that recognizing the plurality of actual discourse and its historically situated nature can be allied to a serious consideration of the real world effects of representation. This, I suggest, would allow archaeological advocacy for representations that are true to the limits of our findings as evidence, and to the constraints our findings place on representations by others. In my view, we do not give up our own standpoint (as archaeologists) by admitting that it is not the only perspective from which to understand the significance of the materials we produce.

Here I would like to go further, and suggest that the expertise that archaeologists have in articulating ways that material can stand as traces of past human lives should compel active advocacy of responsible representations of the past. Giving up authority to determine the final meaning of our work, in other words, does not allow us to give up responsibility for what is made of it.

First Theme: Giving Voice to Voiceless Others

The palaces, tombs, and historical monuments of literate elites dominate public conceptions of archaeology, especially the archaeology of places like Mexico and Central America. This follows directly from the way that archaeologists working in these areas represent their own work to media and, through media, to various publics.

Ironically, this representation of archaeology as the discipline that reconstructs the lives of those already dominating the discursive record obscures the fact that most archaeological research works with traces of the past actions of otherwise unrecorded people (Joyce 2005). We do manage to remain focused on these other past subjects in some approaches, such as household archaeology (Robin 2003). Nonetheless, too often primary emphasis is placed on what can be generalized across cases. This follows, in part, from the influence of positivist models on the archaeologies of the 1960s and 1970s, with their pursuit of the general and depreciation of the non-generalizable (Wylie 2002). But it also follows from the embedding of archaeological discourse within broader representations of archaeology as the pursuit of the answers to questions of origins, rises and falls. We may object to being identified with Indiana Jones and Lara Croft, but we play off their visibility in our museum exhibitions, news press releases, and even the way we shape our professional publications.

I would thus like to propose first, that archaeologists actually have certain responsibilities by virtue of our position with respect to human subjects in the past for whom we may be the only present-day witnesses. The word 'witness' actually doesn't quite capture what I mean here; in Spanish, I would say *testigo*, meaning not just someone who has an authoritative basis to speak, but who does speak. We require an ethical position on representation in which we acknowledge that as archaeologists, we testify for absent subjects, with all that implies.

Second Theme: Multiple Pasts or One Past with Some Variation?

Many archaeologists do acknowledge that there can be additional perspectives, from different standpoints, on understanding the past. There are at least four different lines of argument, some even favored by positivist archaeologists, for allowing for alternative representations based on the same archaeological materials.

First, most archaeologists will acknowledge today that the various publics that directly or indirectly fund archaeological research, or which may own and therefore exercise control over archaeological sites, have an interest in knowing something about these sites. This has resulted in a rich, and continually growing, body of publications seriously concerned with the relationships of archaeologists to their publics (Colley 2002; Jameson 2004; Little 2002; Merriman 2004; Zimmerman 2003). But we can question how profoundly these new orientations have changed most archaeologists' practice. With typical self-deprecation, almost any archaeologist will admit (assume) that members

of the wider public are not interested in (cannot understand) the internal language and logics of archaeology.

Thus it becomes routine to craft additional interpretations to resonate with local, national, or international publics. For example, an archaeological project may be concerned with the nature of state formation, only incidentally using a Classic Maya site as a case study. But the same archaeologists will present to international audiences, in lectures, news releases, and popular books, a story of the reign of kings and their succession over time; and to national publics, will offer the same story, now framed as the history of the nation; while for the local public, they may make the connection between the language of the monuments and local indigenous language, drawing direct connections between the words used for everyday tasks today and a reading of glyphs interpreted as an ancient ritual. But these public-oriented histories do not, normally, go so far as to turn over control of the narrative to other parties. They routinely coordinate the stories for the public with the stories of the archaeologists' own interests, translated into another language (Joyce 2003).

A second widely, though less universally, accepted basis for alternative representations comes with the acknowledgement of the existence of descendant communities with special interests in how their own ancestors are described. This has also produced a growing literature testifying to the passionate engagement of many people in producing alternative narratives based on archaeological research (Colley 2002; Lilley 2000; Mathers *et al*. 2005; Smith and Wobst 2005; Watkins 2000). Archaeologists traditionally found it convenient to make connections with descendant communities to make the task of justifying ethnographic analogies easier (Cotjí Ren 2002). But the same archaeologists may not be so comfortable with a broader claim by descendant communities to contest aspects of representations.

Thus, when Guatemalan Maya people argue that the emphasis by archaeologists and epigraphers on the warlike status of Classic Maya statecraft creates problems in the present, and suggest more balance in emphasis, there is less movement on the part of the archaeologists (Cotjí Ren 2002). Militarism, it appears, is a fact of Classic Maya life, not simply an aspect of Classic Maya political discourse. Thus for many archaeologists, descendant communities are authorized to draw connections with the past, but only with the past offered already by the archaeologists.

A third avenue for multiplying representations, or better, transforming the process of representation, is offered by the kinds of critiques exemplified by feminist archaeology and other politically engaged archaeological analyses (Schmidt and Patterson 1995; Wylie 1992, 1995). In this variant, alternative representations offered are usually treated as of interest to, and often are produced by, a sub-group within the archaeological community. These representations are then isolated and can be treated as parallel non-intersecting discourses generated from 'the same data' but based in different research questions. Instead of the formation of the state, a Classic Maya archaeologist may want to explore women's lives in Classic Maya states. A worthy goal, and one certainly not

objectionable to anyone, as long as the proponents stay in the rooms assigned them and don't try to say that what they are doing has any significance for the 'broader' questions. But don't try to suggest that women spinning and weaving cloth were recognized as contributing to the public ceremonies in which the products of their labor were used, or that their technical expertise counts as a form of craft specialization.

Finally, at least some archaeologists will propose that the same material traces, because they do not of themselves define a single, unique interpretation, could support more than one archaeological discourse. This is the position most often parodied as extreme relativism, although to my knowledge, no actual archaeologist defends a position of potential explanations unconstrained by what Wylie (1992, 2002) calls 'evidential constraints'. In practice, this alternative is probably better exemplified by the kinds of conflicts between different specialists interpreting the same stratigraphic profile discussed by Raymond Corbey (2005).[1] Everyone agrees that what faces them is all the available evidence, but what counts as evidence, or as important evidence, varies depending on a complex set of factors, including personal histories and how these bias us toward believing some data more than others. In my own experience, bioarchaeologists' responses to each other's work provide an interesting example: when I discuss burials from Tlatilco (Joyce 2001), using the bioarchaeological determinations of age and sex by the project specialists, invariably it is others who practice physical anthropology who question those specifics, while routinely being perfectly happy to accept the arguments I am making based on burial location, treatment, and grave goods.

As my discussion of these four strategies for multiplying representations in archaeology suggests, the contemporary pluralist representational process has involved a kind of compartmentalization, with different audiences recognized as having different interests and perhaps different standards for truth claims. This process normally also presupposes that traditional archaeological representations are most valued, while other representations directed at specific interest groups are added on. In other words, archaeologists continue to act as if we set the agenda, and define the really important questions, in which some others outside or within the community are (sometimes) recognized as having divergent interests.

[1] During the Masterclass, Prof. Dr. Raymond Corbey (Universities of Leiden and Tilburg) presented a thought-provoking summary of his ideas on representation, based on many years of observing the analytic discussions and reasoning of archaeologists. At Corbey's request his presentation was not included here; instead we refer to his publications on the subject, in particular the recent monograph *The Metaphysics of Apes* (Cambridge University Press, 2005) and the article he wrote with Wil Roebroeks 'Biases and double standards in studying the Palaeolithic' for the volume *Studying Human Origins: Disciplinary History and Epistemology* (R. Corbey and W. Roebroeks, Editors): 67-76, Amsterdam University Press. [Editors' note]

Third Theme: Responsibility in Practice

Critics of archaeological pluralism are quick to note that the results of such diverse interpretations may be incoherent, with different data seen as evidence of apparently contradictory processes. This, I think, is where Corbey's (2005) example of palaeoanthropologists engaged in talking without reaching any mutual understanding fits in. The trope used for it – 'talking past one another' – is of critical interest to my argument. I will return to this example below. For now, notice only that it suggests that a usually covert criterion of archaeological analysis is coherence. This raises the interesting question of whether human behavior actually is, in general, coherent?

In one sense, archaeology has always assumed coherence between different actors, as a way to link similar things (objects, cultural practices) together as evidence. Thus the foundational claim of culture-historical research has always been that types of things are the residue of the practices of people who can be identified as a group. Classic Maya people are those who produce Classic Maya art. To achieve that statement, we ignore time (as 'Classic Maya art' changes over the multiple centuries included) and space (as each major center seems to strive to produce distinctive local 'style'). We ignore how a style is reproduced (through inter-generational apprenticeship in crafts, with their attendant technical styles, and through inter-generational learning of values of beauty and the good that foster aesthetics). We seem doomed thereby to flatten out any real complexity of action, or to posit that actors in the past were significantly simpler than actors in the present.

But if we admit into our models actors more like those we recognize in the world around us – with motivations partly shared with others, and partly unique, changing with time and experience, and varying between members of different families, craft traditions, social status groups, wealth classes, and the like – then we seem to risk making the interpretive project unviable, as every proposed interpretation will be by definition particularistic. The certainty enjoyed by evolutionary archaeologists can seem very attractive when faced with the impossibility of foreclosing so many alternative explanations.

I would be delighted to be able to simply say 'that isn't true' when my students raise questions about the African or Chinese origins of Olmec art. It would be so much easier if they would just respect my authority. After all, I've actually seen these things: at best, they have seen nothing more than photographs. I've spent my life working as a field archaeologist, doing settlement survey, architectural and stratigraphic analysis, identifying ceramic technology and morphology, and recognizing motifs and narratives in multiple media. Why doesn't that count for something?

Of course, it should count for something – just, perhaps, not the thing that at my most harassed I wish it would. When my students earnestly ask me whether the facial features of Olmec monumental heads aren't clearly African, what I need to do is act responsibly, literally to respond to them but also to correspond to the limitations of knowledge with which my materials face me.

I cannot actually credibly say these heads do not 'represent' African features. My students would not be asking the question if that reading were not possible, so for at least some contemporary viewers – and this has been true for more than a century – these marks represent such features. I need to identify more specifically why for me this is not the most likely, or even feasible, explanation. That response takes my students seriously as observers, but adds to their observations others they have been ignoring in their recognition of one set of resemblances. Viewed as only one set of human representations within the entire group of images produced at the same time, the features on Olmec heads can be seen as a stylization limited to one kind of monument. Other monuments, some arguably depictions of the same characters, show almost aquiline noses, in profile, in low relief. That the stylization that produces flatter noses and lips happens to be fitted into a ball of stone cut away to leave the features defined on the remnants of the original spherical surface leads me to suggest this set of attributes be viewed as a consequence of techniques of stone carving. It also leads me to helping my students recognize their own, uninterrogated, assumptions about realism in human representation, and confront them with other evidence of a general de-emphasis on realism in Olmec visual culture.

Fourth Theme: Speaking About Archaeological Representation

In the remainder of this paper, I want to review in general some of the arguments I made in *The Languages of Archaeology* (Joyce 2002). I am mindful that recourse to the specialized language of Mikhail Bakhtin in that work may be seen by some as obscuring, rather than clarifying, the issues of representation and the reproduction of communities of knowledge with which the book is concerned. So first, I want to underline the reasons I have for adopting it.

Bakhtin's framework is more than an analysis of textual production; it is fundamentally concerned with the ethical dimensions of action, especially those actions embodied in speech (see especially Bakhtin 1990, 1993). Through the concept of answerability or responsibility, Bakhtin (1993:2-4, 28-29) underlined that speech is always a call for a response or answer from another person. He recognized that the self only takes form through its exchanges with an Other.

His model is both eminently social, populating utterances in context with a plurality of persons, and also ethical, postulating the critical judgement by others of what the speaker or writer says. In Bakhtin's model of truly dialogic communication, the speaker always addresses another outside himself, who is literally an Other; and he uses words that are imbued with the presence of others, so that in each exchange, there is present an I, a thou, and a preceding history of others.

Texts that do not maintain the presence of the Other, or others, Bakhtin describes as monologues of 'pretender-doubles', spoken for rather than spoken with (Bakhtin 1984:292-293) In a very real sense, this is what I think we witness in the example of palaeo-anthropological meetings cited by Corbey (2005), if in fact it is the case that

people really 'talk past each other': a series of monologues that are the break down of communication. More on this example yet again below.

In his emphasis on the ethical burden of responsibility that comes with speaking for others I think Bakhtin captures well the distinction made by Peter Verstraten (this volume) between *Bram Stoker's Dracula*, with its demotion of others to things as their blood is spilt, and ideal cultural representations that would respond to Johannes Fabian's call for maintaining the presence of the other as a you, not an it, in ethnographic texts. This is precisely where Bakhtin himself positioned the human sciences, precisely the challenge he articulated for us (Bakhtin 1986: 161).

The maintenance of responsibility/answerability may seem challenging given the real potential, often realized in action, for archaeological discourse to apparently break down, seen not only in the example of palaeo-anthropology but in areal debates such as those so striking in Oaxacan archaeology. Here it is critical to emphasize that Bakhtin explicitly envisages conflictual responses as part of the range of possibilities that actually may occur as a response in dialogue. This takes us back to the striking example of the way some archaeological communities appear to fail to communicate cited by Corbey (2005).

If the description of 'people talking past each other' in palaeo-anthropological conferences is literally true, then we are seeing monologues. But Willermet and Clark's own description suggests otherwise: they say that 'at times the differences [in preconceptions, assumptions, and biases] were so great as to preclude any [agreement]' (Willermet and Clark 1997:1, cited in Corbey 2005). This is quite a different thing than 'talking past each other'. It appears that what they were expecting was something like the ideal speech situation of Jürgen Habermas, in which an exchange of statements between equals will inevitably lead to some agreement. Bakhtin does not see the world as coming to, or benefiting from, simple agreement (Joyce 2002: 30-31). The babble that seems distressing to Clark and Willermet is from this perspective ultimately better for archaeology than an agreement that would leave in ascendancy unquestioned ideas that may be only loosely warranted by the material under discussion.

It is my own preference to encourage, and therefore to foreground, the positive potential for archaeological discourse of a dialogic commitment, the responses that acknowledge the Other as equal and that enrich both parties in the process. I would agree that we can feel more confident that we are making sense, if not speaking Truth, when what we say is acceptable to some others, as called for by Hilary Putnam (discussed in Corbey 2005). But it is absolutely imperative for us to also have at our disposal the responses of contradiction, disagreement, disavowal. It is only through these rejections of utterances that archaeology has begun to realize some of its necessary responsibility to combat the kinds of statements about the past that circulate widely, authorized by our past and continuing tendency to reaffirm certain kinds of utterances at the expense of other possible utterances.

These include the harmful stereotypes that Franci Taylor (this volume) points to, and we could add a host of others from the archaeology of Mexico and Central America. To take just one – and in doing so, end by engaging with only one of the rich examples offered by Corbey (2005) – we could consider the recent pronouncements in the press to the effect that the question of 'Olmec diffusion' has been settled through the application of Neutron Activation Analysis to samples of white-slipped, incised pottery from a number of sites in Mexico. This example provides an encouraging instance from my perspective because it inadvertently called forth precisely the kinds of engagements that should help change how we talk about results from such techniques in the future.

In brief, for those unfamiliar, Jeffrey Blomster, working with Michael Glascock of the Missouri University Research Reactor, claimed that all the samples analyzed were compatible with an origin on the Gulf Coast of Mexico, perhaps at the site of San Lorenzo itself. As the first sentence of the abstract of their published report put it, 'the first Mesoamerican civilization, the Gulf Coast Olmec, is associated with hierarchical society, monumental art, and an internally consistent ideology, expressed in a distinct style and salient iconography' (Blomster *et al*. 2005:1068). The potsherds analyzed were thus viewed as evidence of an 'internally consistent ideology' diagnostic of 'the first Mesoamerican civilization'. As they themselves noted, this put them on the side of the so-called 'mother culture' hypothesis, which holds that the Gulf Coast sites developed Olmec characteristics that spread from this center.

The MURR posted the data with an invitation to others to download them, an invitation accepted by James Stoltman at the University of Wisconsin. His re-presentation of the same data, viewed from a different angle, argued that they attested to differences that in his view actually map onto different geological sources throughout Mexico, supporting the 'sister culture' model in which exchange of pottery was multi-directional (Stoltman *et al*. 2005). The original data were re-examined using a different statistical approach, in which more of the originally analyzed sherds could be included in identified groups. For these authors, the unity discovered through INAA was the result of the general unity of the geology of the region, when measured at the elemental level. By changing focus to the mineralogical level, they argued, inclusions in the sherds could be identified with locally distinctive geological resources. Their representation of the same data showed sherds from non-local pots at every site, including San Lorenzo (described as only exporting pottery in the original analysis), and including movement of sherds between other sites (something absent from the original analysis).

Neither side in this exchange is likely to change their basic understanding of the nature of the Olmec as a result of these new data, so far from putting an end to the debate, these analyses are likely simply to continue it. Indeed, they have already drawn the authors into dialogue with a proposal that attributes Olmec origins to Shang Chinese, advocated in this instance by Betty Meggars (2005). The Bakhtinian positive here is that these discussions open up the possibility to query why the question framed at the outset ever was Olmec origins and spread? Why is that the right question to ask of these grey and white slipped, incised ceramics?

The fault clearly is not in the method, although that is one way to read this disagreement. We can consider another project employing INAA as a counter-example. In this project, Jeanne Lopiparo (2005) employs INAA not to trace the international spread of a culture, state, religion, or other large-scale entity attributed the power to create pottery, apparently without the agency of any actual people. Instead, she used the same methods to examine local, small-scale distributions of workshop-specific recipes for the creation of pottery artifacts, and their movements – some longer distance – are seen as the result of social contacts between communities of potters in Honduras' Ulua River Valley.

Why does this matter? Lopiparo could have designed the kind of research strategy as is featured in the Olmec ceramic studies, since the pottery she is concerned with, Baracoa Fine Buff, is a local version of the Fine Orange pottery that is a hallmark of the Classic Maya collapse in the western Maya lowlands. She chose not to use her data for such a purpose, and instead to pursue the local-level, human-scale implications of these archaeological materials. That choice was dictated by the dialogues she chooses to engage with, and the people from whom she seeks a response, including non-archaeologists, notably the local population of the region where she works.

We won't be reading articles in the New York Times about how work like this settles the question of the Maya collapse any time soon, although in fact we will only ever make sense of such posited political and super-political events from the ground up, from the perspective of living people who experienced history, not collapse. As Cotjí Ren (2002) notes, in current archaeological discourse:

> Maya Kings are represented as agents in history for ruling a society and making war, yet such rulers appear more like autocrats rather than true leaders of a nation. We learn about rulers and their relations with other rulers, their conquests, the sacrifices made to them but we do not learn about their family relations or festivities or how they governed our people... The lives of the Kings and Spiritual Leaders, warfare, sacrifice, and rituals cannot enclose what a whole Maya society was, no society actually can be narrowed to some separate aspects of life or individual agents.

Archaeological work drawing on all the means of science at our disposal can be attentive to the human scale. Such work absolutely must address the critical need of archaeologists to engage more carefully in their acts of representation and to seek in their dialogues with non-archaeologists to address questions of interest to descendant communities and broader publics who understand the possibilities of the present by what we tell them about the realities of the past. We need to be faithful witnesses for the real humanity of the people whose lives we speak for, a responsibility that can only enrich our own perspectives.

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Franci Taylor

Discovering 'The' American Indian

Everybody in this country thinks they know what an Indian is, when mostly
they know what the media thinks it is. And that goes for the Indian people
as well as for the non-Indian people. The first thing that happens to a new
immigrant who comes over here is that she sits up watching late night TV
and she learns all about Indians from John Wayne movies (Paula Gunn Allen in:
Winged Words: American Indian Writers Speak).

No! I don't feel we did anything wrong in taking this great country away
from them (the Indians). There were a great number of people who needed
new land, and the Indians were being selfish trying to keep it all for themselves
(John Wayne – Western genre actor).

Approximately one thousand years before Columbus sailed into the Caribbean other Europeans were "discovering" the indigenous peoples of the Western Hemisphere and inventing identities for them. Archaeological evidence indicates that a Viking voyage was apparently the first European contact with the indigenous peoples of North America, but compared to later European contact, the Viking contact was brief and did not greatly change the lives of the peoples of the Western Hemisphere.

Columbus and the colonizers that followed him were a completely different occurrence, for they turned the indigenous world of the Western Hemisphere up-side-down. Upon arriving in the Caribbean in 1492 Columbus dubbed the peoples he encountered as "Indian". This misnomer and the negative interpretation it created, produced a devastating and long-lasting negative effect on the vast and diverse civilizations of Europe's so called, "New World." The construction of "the Indian" stereotype was tailored to conform with European, elitist, privileged male concepts and agendas, none of which were designed to benefit the indigenous people of the Americas. This European created stereotype of American Indian identity continues to produce a negative impact on the daily lives of the first peoples of this land.

In the discussion of the creation and imposition of the Indian stereotype it must be understood that there is an inherent problem in any terminology that, for one reason or another, seeks to reduce large diverse groups into single, homogenous identities.

Therefore, it must also be acknowledged that terms such as European, Amer-European[1], White, Anglo, or American also hides the vast diversity found within the dominant society and can be as problematic as terms such as *Indian*. Unfortunately for the indigenous peoples these terms do not hold the same negative political agency as the stereotypes imposed on marginalized peoples. Despite the imbalance found in these reductions it is also important to acknowledge that all stereotypes, be it 'the Indian' or 'the Anglo' serve to create cross-cultural dissonance that prevents productive cooperative dialog. Stereotypes and cultural homogenization compounds rather than solves the problems of cultural misunderstanding and conflicts that exist world-wide today. Therefore, and for convenience alone, within this paper the terms Amer-European, European, Anglo and white, will be used interchangeably to define the majority population of the United States, Canada and Mexico. The terms Indian, American Indian, Native American and Indigenous Peoples[2] will be used interchangeably to indicate the various original populations of the Western Hemisphere and their descendents.

Much has been written about the motivation in the creation and perpetuation of the "American Indian" stereotype. (Adare, 2006; Battalle & Silet, 1980; Berkhofer, 1978; Deloria, 1999; Elliott, 1999; Huhndorf, 2001; Kirkpatrick, 1999; Mihesuah, 1996; Stedman, 1982, etal). Most authors agree that in the early stages of colonization a primary motivation for the creation and propagation of the Indian stereotype was to create a moral justification for the taking of territories that were already occupied and to eliminate any perceived aboriginal claim to that land. As long as there could be posed the question as to the basic humanity of Indian people there could be justification to "liberating" the land from them. If the land was not inherently owned by the indigenous residents they could, and would be categorized as the epitome of the resident, but alien, "other". This process was first used in the Caribbean by the explorer Columbus.

Today, many contemporary scholars scoff at Columbus and question his belief that the Caribbean Island he saw were in fact the lower estuary of the River Ganges, (Moffitt & Sebastian 1996). Because of this monumental error it is understandable that he believed that the people he encountered were the strange and exotic peoples of India. Of course, when viewed through the lens of modern knowledge, his conclusion seems

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1 Amer-European is a relatively new term first used by John Joseph Mathews (Osage) and although found predominantly in indigenous publications, it is finding increasing acceptance in a wider application. It was created to specifically indicate an imbalance of influence and power imposed by the United States government on the world along with the relationship between these progeny of Europe and the land upon which they now dwell (Weaver 1998).

2 The broader referencing term 'Indigenous Peoples.' in the plural, has become the generally accepted term at the international level, especially in legal actions. According to the definitions used by the United Nations this indicates a population that existed in a region prior to colonization. However, even the use of this term is often debated, primarily on the basis that it does not establish or illustrate an individual person's relationship to a specific nation or community.

ridicules, but his assumptions were based on the widely accepted mythology of the day. Columbus began his voyage with a firmly established, and widely accepted, preconceived notion of whom and what he might encounter on his journey to the west. Fanciful myths of exotic far away places that lay beyond the horizon and the strange creatures that lived there were a popular Medieval trope. This genre of fictionalized travel dialogs began in the era of Marco Polo and peaked around 1357 when John Mandeville wrote his famous fiction, *The Travels of Sir John Mandeville*. This fictional "journal" was also published under the title of, *Mandeville's Book of the Marvels of the World*. In his books Mandeville describes to his readers numerous wildly fanciful and terrifying creatures that he claimed to have encountered on his world travels, (Moffitt & Sebastian).

Like many other European pseudo-adventurers of his day, Mandeville was an armchair traveller who had never ventured far beyond his sitting room or own back yard. Despite his fanciful misrepresentations and outright lies, Mandeville was wildly successful as a writer and his fictional travel accounts were soon translated into every major language of Europe, including Portuguese, which Columbus owned a copy of. In the late 15th Century Mandeville books were second only to the Bible in sales. This popularity created a situation where fantasy took on greater validity and power than reality. As many of the first explorers to the "New World" returned home and were asked to make reports on their travels, they found that for the general population and royal courts of Europe to believe their descriptions of new lands and peoples they encountered, the report had to be adapted to conform to accepted stereotypes. These stereotypes held more currency than the truth and their long term, enduring detrimental impact on indigenous peoples in the Americas can not be over stated. The social and cultural consequences of this colonization process of stereotyping and "othering" is still with us today and the stereotypic Indian of myth and fiction continues to haunt contemporary indigenous peoples across the Western Hemisphere. This process may have begun prior to Columbus, but Hollywood, with its creation of the epic western genre, must bear significant responsibility for the commercial promotion and wide distribution of an ongoing negative Indian representation throughout the twentieth century.

The Columbus voyage opened the flood gates of imperialism and the entire Western hemisphere was quickly subjected to an endless flood of colonizers and colonization. The wealth in metals and even new foods provided an endless draw to the European. Although the precious metals soon ran out, there was addition gold to be found in the production of sugar, and the export of goods such as cotton, maize, beans, potatoes, peppers, tomatoes, tobacco and much more. All of these goods improved the conditions and lives of average people living in Europe, however, even in these things, the positive contribution made by indigenous peoples has been erased from the historic record in an effort to further disempower and marginalize the Indian(Viola & Margolis, 1991). Although the Caribbean and the Southern half of the Americas were the first to suffer from the invasion from Europe in took less than 20 years for the impact to move into the Northern half of the Americas. By AD 1513 Ponce de Leon had arrived on North

American soil and the invasion of North American began. Again, the people encountered were identified as "Indians" and the colonial process and subjugation of the indigenous populations continued with the French, English, Dutch and others. Both the Indian misnomer and stereotype began to take on a life of its own. Within 35 years from initial contact, the first European history of the new world and its indigenous inhabitants was begun by the newly appointed Bishop of Chiapas, Bartolome de Las Casas. De Las Casas is frequently classified as "a friend to the Indian", but his history, which carried the title *Historia de las Indias*, supported church ideals and firmly established that the misnomer of *Indian* would continue to be imposed upon all of the indigenous peoples of the Americas through Europe.

As thousands of Europeans spread across the Americas they took the term *Indian and its accompanying ideologies* with them and it became an integral part of the imperialistic process within the Western Hemisphere. Analysis of visual art, literary production and archaeological remains of a native civilization such as that of Ñuu Dzaui or Mixtec are still influenced by stereotypical representations of the Indian as "colonized other". A lot can be learned from interpreting the situation of Mexico's pueblos originarios in the light of developments in the North American construction of the North American Indian stereotype. These stereotypic representations of American Indian peoples have played a significant role in their marginalization within the nation-states of the Western Hemisphere.

To deconstruct and fully understand the negative implications of the Indian stereotype on contemporary indigenous communities one must begin with a look at the long and troubled history of European-Indian and Amer-European-Indian interaction. Because of the unequal influence exerted by the Hollywood movie and media it is important to begin with the development of the Indian stereotype within the United States. The United States began as a nation philosophically grounded in enlightenment concepts and comprised primarily of immigrants from various European nation-states. In the 17th Century most immigrants attempted to maintain philosophical and social ties to their mother countries although the war of Independence rent this relationship asunder. By 1780 the war was over and the formal creation of the new Untied States of America was begun. It was imperative to the new nation that the culturally diverse citizens perceive themselves first and foremost as "American" citizens, rather than of immigrates of "Old World" communities. To accomplish this, ties to former identities had to be diminished and replaced with a new and a uniquely "American" identity.

A crucial element of this new persona became the quintessential American Indian icon. Politically, Indians could be utilized as the ultimate "alien other". The American Indian could be both an icon for the rugged American "frontier's man, and the wolf beyond the door to gather against. Since it was first created, the Indian stereotype has operated on a dualistic stage. On one hand the individual Indian could be good and acceptable, while on the other hand, as a group they were an impediment to state and social stability. In federal policy this dichotomy also changed from good to bad. During the limited good times the Indian was cast as a noble primitive, living beyond the

fringes of civilization. An ideal of a past evolutionary time. An uncontaminated primitive, simple and pure, but forever imprisoned in the past. When policy was bad, they became the vicious savage, hampering Manifest Destiny, terrifying innocent Americans and justifiably doomed to repulsion and extinction. In a large part this exclusion-inclusion dichotomy continues today for most North American Indian communities. On one hand the non-Indians media projects an image of "the" Indian as a repository for ancient secrets. This is usually a singular elderly male "medicine man" or nubile young Indian "princess". Both equally dedicated to the Amer-European. On the other hand, Indians as groups are seen as greedy, casino owning gangsters, who despite their vast wealth continue to draw social resources causing a drain on the national economy. Both are equally simplistic and can only be created by the reduction of vast, complex, multi-linguistic cultures into a simplistic, mono-dimensional representation.   Unfortunately, for those indigenous peoples living in Central and South America, the negative side of the cultural expression remains the predominant social reality. Seldom, if ever, does the media here present a positive icon of the indigenous person.

Although many promises were made to Indian people that the U.S. government would protect their diminishing numbers and land base by the end of the 19th Century American Indian communities were at their lowest point since first contact. Most of their land and resources had been taken and the 1900 U.S. Census indicated that less than 250,000 Indian people had survived the wars and were still living within the United States. Cultural extermination had also decimated Indian communities. Policies such as the outlawing of Indian spirituality and the off reservation boarding schools had worked to made sure that the remaining few Indian people were assimilated into the dominant society. Anthropologists of the day declared that "the Indian" was a vanishing race and efforts were undertaken to document their cultures and dying life ways before they were extinct. The United States was becoming civilized. The untamed west was gone and the "real Indians" were officially declared to be residents of either the past or the staged Wild West Show. Moving pictures were introduced in the late 1800s and by 1908 moving pictures were being produced in California. Hollywood and the movie industry was born and perhaps the most popular genre coming out was the western, complete with the necessary "Plains Indian warrior on horse back". Between 1920 and 1950 the western was absolutely the top box office revenue generator and few American citizens had not been introduced to and indoctrinated by the Hollywood Indian.

Federal Indian Policy level at the turn of the 20th Century were decidedly anti-Indian with strict rules to speed the elimination of the Indian as a separate culture. But the Indian people continued to have some friends and the 1930s brought what appeared to be positive changes for American Indian people. Under the guidance of John Collier, new policies were enacted to reverse the devastating conditions on reservations and Indian communities. Although there remained the underlying principle that assimilation was still the ultimate solution to the "Indian Problem," some self-determination and social improvements were established. Hollywood at this time continued to portray the Indian as a social evil and Collier's attempts were short lived. By the 1950s Congress once

again responded to the negative stereotypes that prevailed in the media and began to act to revoke most Collier-Era improvements and push for further eliminations of Indian communities. During this time a number of tribes were arbitrarily "terminated" by the Federal Government. Ultimately, it took the Civil Rights Era of the 1960s, when African-American communities rose up and began to demand equal rights and to have their voices heard, to open doors for all other minorities, including American Indians. During this time, U.S. President John F. Kennedy again charged Congress to respond to the documentation that had been presented to him regarding the horrific conditions that existed in Indian communities. Kennedy opened his commission on the Indian situation by stating:

> For a subject worked and reworked so often in novels, motion pictures and television, American Indians remain probably the least understood and most misunderstood Americans of us all. It seems a basic requirement to study the history of our Indian people. America has much to learn about the heritage of our American Indians. Only through this study can we as a nation do what must be done if our treatment of the American Indian is not to be marked down for all times as a national disgrace (Kennedy Report 1963).

Sadly, although this statement was made over forty years ago, it remains virtually as true today as when it was first issued. The stereotype of the American Indian continues to be one of the most recognizable icons of the United States and the most vilified and fictionalized. As stated before, the abuses that American Indian people have suffered as a result of the many negative stereotypes imposed on them is well documented. As the authors in, *Rethinking Columbus: The Next 500 Years* point out, stereotypes are never harmless. By definition they are generalizing concepts, held by one social group about another that are usually used in a negative or prejudicial way (Bigelow & Petersen, Ed.1998). They are frequently used by members of dominant cultures or political institutions to justify discriminatory behaviors and abuses. Social-political stereotypes promote one-dimensional, iconic images that serve to reduce a diverse group to a single over-simplified and frequently negative category, that promotes a political agenda that allows the entire group to be marginalized and disempowered. Stereotypic images are founded on assumptions, myths, half-truths, inaccurate or incomplete information. Even when stereotypes appear simple or harmless at the surface level, they are the proverbial "social onion", made up of layers upon layers of social and political ideology that promotes the dominate society at the expense of the minority. No where is this more evident than for the communities of Indians to the South of the United States(Bigelow & Petersen).

To unravel 500 years of lies, misrepresentations, and mistakes to get at the core of the problem one must reflect on the beginning of colonization. When the first European immigrants came to colonize North America they saw in indigenous communities a bewildering mixture of new and confusing cultures. Out of the ensuing confusion and colonial arrogance, the first profoundly negative Indian stereotypes were born. In the

colonial record, the characteristics that were most frequently referenced were those that from the European perspective, placed the Indian outside the bounds of "civilization" and civilized behaviour. Included in these "asocial" behaviours were the high status of women, communal ownership of land, an ability to live seamlessly upon the land, and a strong warrior culture and ethic. But of all of these it was, and is, the "warrior" image that was most frequently used and which followed American Indian people into the 21st century.

Even today, when the majority of Americans or Europeans would not confuse the Dutch with the Spanish, or French with Germans, they seem unable or unwilling to separate Choctaw from Haida or Diné from Lakota, irregardless that these cultures are equally or more different from each other than any European cultures. Primary school teachers and television commercials continue to place Northwest Coast totem poles beside Plains Indian tipis, although historically these occurred in very different cultures and were separated by distances of over 1,500 miles. Only in very recent time and in a very limited number of history texts have the western movement been categorized as an "invasion" of Indian territory and the vast contribution made by indigenous peoples remains virtually unmentioned. It would seem that for most non-Indians, all Indians still belong to the horse mounted, feather head dressed Plains Indian culture and are forever held prisoner somewhere in time around the late 19th Century.

From its beginning, the motion picture industry produced a simple interpretation of the American Indian and the American west, which it had borrowed from the dime novels of the late 18th and early 19th centuries. This mono-focused, simplistic perspective was based, in part, on the fact that this was a period of concerted U.S. empire building. To compliment this, the message projected by Hollywood was one where the US government, usually represented by the US 7th Calvary of the late 1800s and of Colonel Custer-Little Big Horn fame, was always the 'good guys' and in the end, they would always win. The Indians were always the 'bad guys', and in the end, justifiably, they would always lose. The message is straight forward and clear. Indians are bad – Indians deserve to lose. This greatly impairs the ability to perceive American Indians as valuable contributing members of society. The greatest damage from this message comes when young children are exposed to this propaganda. It does not matter if the child is Indian or non-Indian for significan damage to be done. However, for the America Indian child, to be told that you and your people are some how less than worthy is devastating.

The damage done goes far beyond impressions of small children. These impressions usually follow a person into adulthood. When these negative stereotypes are accepted by those individuals who hold a position of social or political power the resulting damage can be far reaching. Research has shown that a majority of United States legislators whom have proposed negative legislation or voted against legislation that would improve conditions for Indian communities do it based on their existing stereotypes, frequently learned from the mass media. In most cases, those people with the most legislative power are also the most isolated and insulated from the issues, problems and

concerns of American Indian communities, especially those Indian communities that are located on isolated reservation lands.

Following her terms as Principal Chief of the Oklahoma Cherokee Nation, Wilma Mankiller, reflected on her many years of negotiating with local, state and federal legislators. She stated that when she questioned legislators about their awareness of Indian-issues many indicated that their primary knowledge about Indian people came not from any contact with any Indian individual, Indian communities, or research done by reputable sources, but rather from what they had seen in the movies, on television, or had read in some western novel. Further, when these legislators were asked to describe an American *Indian,* the majority produced either a degenerate person living on the edges of society or a fanciful, historically incorrect variation of homogenized Plains Indian culture, as was presented in various John Ford movies. In Ford movies the Indian was either a savage enemy, to be vanquished, or part of the scenery. These legislators openly admitted that it was the negative Hollywood stereotypes that most influenced how they voted on Indian issues (Mankiller 2003).

The foundations of the Hollywood myth is based on a colonial prejudice that was exasperated by the vast differences in cultural values and world views between colonizer and indigenous peoples. The problem contained more than a belief in racial superiority by the colonizer. Inherent in the creation and perpetuation of a vilifying stereotype was the necessity to avoid social dissonance caused by the taking of indigenous land and resources. Social dissonance occurs when a society's actions can not be aligned with their accepted moral values and philosophies. Historically, when this happens it has been more expedient for the dominant society to create a negative image of the alien culture, rather than adjust the self-serving national political agenda. This is apparent in the documentation of the treatment of American Indians. When inhuman acts were perpetrated it became necessary to resolve the resulting dilemma by portraying the Indian victims as sub-human or inherently evil.

The "Rights of Discovery" promoted by early colonists were by no means unanimously accepted in the public arena or legal systems of Europe. As early as the beginning of 16th century, debates over the legitimacy of the policy of had begun in Europe. One answer to the debate was to dehumanize the colonized peoples. Cultural and political dissonance would be reduced or eliminated, if and when, it could be ascertained that the populations in question were not "civilized" and therefore any extermination policies could not be immoral because the populations that were "deserving" of extinction. As convoluted as it may seem, this policy allowed for the massacre of entire indigenous villages. Revenge for these massacres by Indians only served to prove to a receptive audience that these people were vicious and deserving of extinction, since they were attacking "innocent Christians". It is out of this cultural dissonance and the attempts to resolve it that statements like, "We didn't take this land from honest, hard working Christians, we rescued it from heathen savages and cannibals!" were promoted.

This type of hyper-glossed, fictional simplification was quickly adapted into North American colonial literature, dime novels and eventually into the motion picture and television industry.

In the social and political atmosphere of U.S. Manifest Destiny, the myth of the heartless marauding Indian warrior found general acceptance. If God had decreed that the U.S. should extend from 'sea to shining sea,' the American Indian's attempts to prevent the invasion and taking of their homelands could only be construed as a violation of God's wishes, which would make the Indians enemies of both God and the state. To add icing to the cake of alienation the mythical savage Indian warrior not only attacked and killed innocent Whites, but he enjoyed torturing them before killing and scalping them. In the border areas between Mexico and the United States this rational was expanded to include 'the Mexican' as part Indian, part Spanish bandito, as an equal enemy beside the Indians.

An Indian blood-thirst is the most common stereotype perpetrated against Indian people. Viciousness, such as in the act of scalping, and the enjoyment in torture has been promoted within the mass media as an integral part of indigenous warfare and lifestyles. According to Hollywood, cultures in Mezzo-America sacrificed thousands of innocents to their blood-thirsty idols. It would seem that daily blood-letting was the norm rather than the exception. In North American mythology, the Indian man was required, as an act of passage from child to man, to kill and scalp an enemy. Without showing his ability to kill he would never be considered a real man. According to the Hollywood myth, the more scalps a man took the greater status he would be accorded. In Hollywood ceremonial headdresses became representational of scalps taken and virtually all Western movies relied on frequent references to "the" Indians scalping innocent white people. Every Indian village scene required prominently displayed and clearly visible scalps, hung by the door of every tipi or lodge. According to the Hollywood image, senseless warfare and scalping was universal to all Indian tribes. The Media would also have the viewer believe that this was a practice invented in North America by Indigenous peoples and that it was only practiced by Indians and those few Amer-Europeans who had been pushed 'over the edge' by inhumane acts perpetrated on their loved ones, usually a wife, virginal daughter or sister, by Indians.

In reality, the act of scalping was not widely known or widely practiced in North America prior to European contact. Well-established documentation indicates that scalping and the beheading of enemies was known throughout human history and was an established practice in Europe as far back as Greek times. There is also documentation that indicates that the first modern use of scalping as a bounty was begun by the British army in Ireland to, 'solve the Irish problem.' Of course it is reasonable to assume that scalping did happen in pre-colonial North America, as it did in all other parts of the world, however, there is virtually no documentation or rchaeological evidence to indicate that it occurred on any but on a very limited basis, and never for economic gain. A

market economy that was based on the act of killing and scalping was absolutely an European development. The first documented instance in the American colonies of paying bounties for native scalps is credited to Governor Kieft of New Netherlands(Bigelow & Petersen). It remains unclear if Kieft and the Dutch had used the human bounty concept prior to its implementation in the Americas, or if it was borrowed from the British and their 'success' it brought them in Ireland. Although other groups used the scalp-bounty system, the British were by far the most aggressive in their promotion of scalping. In 1755, The British Governor of Massachusetts Bay, William Shelly, posted a proclamation offering a 40 pound bounty to be paid for every scalp of a male Indian over the age of 12 presented to the office of the Governor. Additionally, 20 pounds would be paid for the scalp of every Indian woman or child". Based on existing documents of governmental expenditures it becomes obvious that significantly more women and children were killed than men (Bigelow & Petersen).

Numerous Hollywood movies have utilized two well-known fictionalized examples of colonial era misrepresentations of scalping as an Indian act, which were popularized in the paintings of *The Death of Jane McCrea* and *The Indian Massacre at Wilkes Barre*. In both of these paintings it appears as though the stereotypic savage Indians are the aggressors and are preying on innocent Amer-European pioneers. The dramatic classical structure of these paintings reinforces the illusion of Indian-initiated violence and leaves no doubt as to who is the innocent victim. The documented history reveals a very different story. Instead of an Indian attack both of these assaults on the settlers were the results of the invasion of General Burgoyne's British troops into the New England countryside during the American Revolution. Although there was a massacre perpetrated at Wilkes Barr, the majority of those killed were Indians who had attempted to protect the Rebel Americans and were seen as friendly to the American cause. According to first person accounts, Jane McCrea's death was due to bullets from the pursuing British troops and not Indians. In a Forensic history investigation done in 2003 it was concluded that Jane McCrea's death was a result of numerous bullet wounds, and not head trauma as the myth and painting would indicate. Also supporting the British responsibility, lead bullets recovered from the body was not hand cast but were of a standard British military issue. The Wilkes Barre Massacre is much the same. Although the deaths at Wilkes Barre were used to enflame revolutionary sentiment against the Iroquois and their British allies, local eye-witness accounts tell a very different story. The grandmother of historian Thomas R. DeVoe was 18 years old at the time of the battle, which took place on her family farm. In her journal she wrote of the event, stating:

> The greatest struggle was on the second field north of Daniel DeVoe's house, where the bodies of some seventeen Indians lay, sliced, cut and hacked to death. Beside were the bodies of others who died in their attempts to escape in several directions. It was a terrible slaughter of about 30 Indians (Archives Wilkes University).

When John van Derlyn painted *The Death of Jane McCrea* in 1801 it did not matter that the reality of the situation was in direct contradiction to his promoted image. What mattered, both socially and economically, was that a product was created that was guaranteed to promote and justify the national political agenda, and therefore fetch a much higher commission. From Wilkes Barre to Sand Creek, the creation of a palatable anti-Indian, stereotypic myth served the needs of the imperialistic national agenda. When lacking a documented travesty for use to promote the national imperialist agenda, one was invented and distributed through various media sources. *The Death of Jane McCrea* remains one of the most frequently reproduced, copied and distributed icons of American history, even despite widespread knowledge that this was a completely fictionalized account. Hundreds of variations were repainted and renamed to represent hundreds of different real and imagined battles that occurred over the following 100 years. The Death of Jane McCrea continues to inspire American myth-makers and is found in both literature and Hollywood's Indian stereotype. It is even considered the proto-type for Cora in *Last of the Mohicans*. Over the past 100 years numerous variations of Jane have appeared on the silver screen. For example, variations of Jane were seen in David Belasco's 1893 drama, *The Girl I left Behind Me*, in D.W. Griffith's 1913 silent film, *The Battle at Elderbush Gulch* and later in various John Ford westerns (Kilpatrick 1999: 19).

Hollywood executives often attempt to dismiss their responsibility for any negative social impact caused by negative representations in film and television. However, a growing corpus of research documents that stereotype create significant harm, especially in an educational context. Because of parental outrage in the early 1980s over the lack of accuracy in the standard history text used in many school districts there developed a nation-wide demand to upgrade, review and standardize the US. history curriculum, especially in its presentations, or lack there of, of all minority groups. Parents and educators demanded that schools tell a more accurate US history. After much fanfare and media attention announcing the new and improved history curriculum many parent groups and educational reviewers indicated that they were not impressed with the so-called changes. Despite this nation-wide demand for revisions, a majority of the history books examined in 1990 not only continued to utilize illustrations of *The Death of Jane McCrea, but the accompanying explanation still* indicated that she had been 'murdered by the savages'. Beyond the misuse of Jane McCrea these texts also continue to present pre-European cultures as simple nomadic bands of hunters and gathers who were 'given' the knowledge on how to grow crops by European farmers. Of the vast and dynamic cultures in Central and South American only the Aztec are mentioned, and again with a focus on human sacrifice and eventual defeat at the hands of the Spanish. Still no mention was made of the introduction by indigenous farmers of maize, potatoes, or any other product.

Educational psychologists point out that children whose ancestors are represented in the history texts or the media as vicious savages, or sub-humans, suffer irreparable dam-

age to their self-esteem. This then diminishes their ability to attain success in the school system or the wider American society. Postcolonial psychologist Edward Duran (Pueblo and Apache) states, anxiety and depression are high, (in American Indian communities) suicide rates are the highest for any ethnicity, and school drop-out rates are as high as 70% in some communities' (Duran 1995: 24)

All nationalistic movements manipulate the production of the official history to cast themselves as heroes in the historical narratives. This is especially true when their history includes acts of aggression and violence against minority or marginalized populations. To justify continuing abuses against the dispossessed and marginalized, a mythology must be created and maintained that indicates that by reasons of social defect, the dispossessed group 'deserved' what was visited on them. Negative stereotypes are created and distributed to promote this social Darwinism and to create clearly defined boundaries between the elite ruling class and the disposed. The dominant society is invariably cast within its media representations as superior and more civilized. In opposition the dominated culture is cast as degenerate, primitive, and doomed from the start to pass into obscurity. This is especially true in the Hollywood treatment of the indigenous peoples of North and Central America. By the time the motion picture industry gained social prominence, the colonizing process had been perfected to the degree that the stereotypes presented of American Indians were seldom, if ever, questioned. On the big screen of Hollywood all Indians were created to look alike and all Indians were doomed, pitiful creatures of the past. From a strictly economic perspective a reduction of hundreds of diverse cultures into a single Indian icon had an tremendous advantage. In a 'bottom-line' industry it was more cost and time efficient to produce limited homogenous costume kits to encompass all Indian identities and personalities.

The misrepresentation of subjugated people is not unique to the United States. It is certainly also present in Mexico and many other areas of Central and South America. In the United States, however, use of the Indian stereotype has had a special application. From its inception the United States was unique on the world stage. It is a nation-state with a power structure devised and comprised entirely of immigrants from the various nation-states of 'old' Europe. During the Revolutionary War in 1776 the dominant citizenry was mostly of English ancestry. However, many of the new ruling class wanted to distance themselves from the aristocracy of the British crown, and there was also a significant enough citizenry from France, Germany, Holland, and Spanish to resist any attempt to create a 'New Britain'. So in many ways the manufactured, often dualist stereotype of the American Indian provided the new nation with a unique way in which to forge its needed new identity. On one hand the Indian could be the representation of the quintessential 'enemy of the state' as the Indian stereotype as vicious savage embodied all that is wild, uncivilized and opposite of the civilized American. At the same time a 'good Indian' representation could be co-opted to enhance the image of a vigorous, virtuous all-American male adventurer/pioneer. In American literature this good-evil Indian dichotomy has served the country well. When the Indian is bad, he is vanquished

by the Amer-European. When the Indian is good, he is completely supportive of his white counterpart, who for the most part can out-Indian the Indian. A good example for this is found in the writings of James Fennimore Cooper and the subsequent film adaptations of his stories. While both the good and the bad Indians are doomed to extinction, the positive traits of the good Indian will be

carried forward and improved upon by the All-American male hero. This dichotic imagery appeared early in the Hollywood depiction of the American mystique. From Natty Bumpo and Old Shatterhand to Lieutenant Dunbar and Chuck Norris, it is the Amer-European male that knows how to best use the knowledge passed on to him by one or another 'indigenous side-kicks.' In the end, it is the Anglo American hero that moves forward leaving the Native American trapped in the past, usually somewhere around 1860. From Buffalo Bill's Wild West Shows to Dances with Wolves, the Indian stereotype has always been more about the construction and enhancement of a mythical 'All-American' identity than about American Indians. As Jacqueline Kilpatrick states:

> In the building of a new American national mythology, we see this self-identification by a dominant (Euro-American) group emerge as primary in importance, largely because American identity, like all national identities, is determined by its relationships to other cultures. For immigrant nations where the Euro-American is anything but homogenous, the Native became a clearly definable Other (Kilpatrick: xvi).

The motion picture industry arrived on the American scene during a period of open and unabashed American imperialism and expansionism. The overt policy of the period was solidly based on the theory of Manifest Destiny and its self-serving bias. It was the turn of a new century and a new world order. In 1901 Theodore Roosevelt had just become the President of the Untied States and other than the showman, Buffalo Bill Cody, few public figures in America so blatantly created and promoted a fictionalized wild-west frontiersman persona. At the same time few politicians were more openly racist and anti-Indian in their public statements about indigenous people. On numerous occasions he was confronted by the press in regards to his policies and dealings with the American Indians and the devastating problems they faced. Without exception in these exchanges he stated variations of his belief that if the Indian deserved to be vanquished and if the Indian was not satisfied with what he had and was not capable of assimilating into the American mainstream, 'let him…perish from the face of the earth which he cumbers'. Based on his exploits in the Spanish-American War the only people he held in lower esteem than the North American Indians were the Indigenous peoples of Central and South America, of whom he would not even discuss accepting or assimilating. Considering the power that Roosevelt held it is not remarkable that it was within this social and political atmosphere that Hollywood began to produce a vast collection of the 'western' films filled with stereotypic heathen Indian savages and Mexican bandits.

Early Twentieth Century nationalism did not allow a critical presentation of United States'

military actions. Open public criticism of government actions did not appear until the post-Vietnam era. Prior to Vietnam, the Seventh Calvary was always portrayed in the saviour role on the big screen. By the 1950 and 1960s a new variation of the Jane McCrea (threatened white virgin) trope was re-introduced. Although the idealized threat from Indians remained virtually unchanged, now the death of the heroine was no longer considered necessary or beneficial. In the western movie the good/evil tension within the script was usually provided by the appearance of a refined, delicate, upper-class Amer-European woman (reincarnated Jane McCrea). Through no fault of her own, she finds herself placed in imminent danger of capture by attacking savage Indians. As the Indians draw ever nearer and her capture appears to be inevitable, the camera frames on the face of the terrified woman and closes in. As she cries and trembles in abject fear, the barrel of a revolver enters the side of the frame and behind her head. The message and intent is obvious. Rather than let a pure unadulterated white woman fall into the hands of the 'savages,' it is preferable that she dies. Even if the message is not spoken aloud, and often it was, the audience is reminded, 'You know what *they* do to white women.' Of course, the 7th Calvary arrives 'just in the nick-of-time,' the savages are vanquished, and as they say, 'all's well that ends well,' except for damage done to the unfortunate American Indian child who views this and is also reminded again and again, that it is better to be dead than touched by an Indian.

From colonial times on, there was a fear within the elite, Anglo, male-dominated, Amer-European society as to what would happen to Amer-European women and children If they fell into the hands of 'the' Indians. It was a common statement that any white woman who was captured by a tribe would become so 'damaged' that if she could be rescued, it would be impossible to rehabilitate her back into to 'civilized' society. What is never mentioned in this convoluted version of reality is that within most Indian communities, women held high status and were accorded privileges that were unheard of in American or European society. Not only did women hold political and social status, in many groups only women owned property and chose the leaders of the group. Therefore, it is not unreasonable that an Amer-European woman who had become accustomed to the freedom and status accorded her in an adoptive Indian society would refuse to return to a culture where she would, not only lose her high status, right to own property and to voice her opinion in political maters, but where she would be treated as damaged property by her family and neighbors.

Examples of this problem were documented in 1774, when Colonel Henry Bouquet wrote to His superiors regarding the difficulties he was having in repatriating White women and children to their communities of origin. He commented that it was common knowledge that after informing these women and children that they were to be reunited with their Amer-European families and communities, most ran away and hid until the threat of removal went away. Those that were captured and forced to return to their Amer-European families frequently had to be bound hand and foot to remove them from the Indian village (Thornton 1987). Of course this 'inexplicable' behaviour

was accredited to some little understood Indian witchcraft or contamination. The belief of contamination was so pervasive in the colonial literature that it eventually found its way into contemporary education, history books and Hollywood. In the award winning John Ford film, *The Searchers,* the hero (John Wayne) discusses what would be the appropriate response for them to take with his niece who has been taken by the Comanche should they ever find her. The general consensus is that she should be killed and "put out of her misery." It is not until the final scenes of the movie that it is decided that despite the contamination, they will allow her to live and be reformed and reintegrated back into the family.

When accused of negative implication of the Indian stereotype many non-Indians question the seriousness of these myths and can not see the damage caused. However, in a 2001 study, when U.S. students, from primary to university levels, were asked to explain what they knew about American Indians; what they look like, what they do, how they live, a majority still responded with existing stereotypic and colorful images that reflected what they had seen on television and in the movies. To most, "the" Indian was most often some ambiguous variation of a Plains Indian Horse culture from a period between 1850 and 1880. This over-simplified iconic representation of Plains Indian culture is so pervasive that even contemporary people have been brainwashed into accepting the Hollywood representation as what a 'Real Indian' should look and sound like. After viewing the movie Dances with Wolves, Jan Elliott remembers:

> As I was leaving the theater after my first viewing of the movie Dances with Wolves, I happened to be walking between two white couples. All of them were raving about how wonderful the movie was and 'accurately' it had portrayed the Indians. As one man stated, I'm so ashamed of this culture we live in and how it treated [past tense] the Indians (Elliott 1998: 14).

Intrigued Elliott felt compelled to question what this person had done to assist Indian people from the ongoing assault on Indian culture and rights by the Canadian, American, and Central American governments. The man was quick to add, 'Oh, I don't mean *those* kind of Indians, I mean the *real* Indians' (Elliott 1998: 14).

It would seem that the degree of acceptance contemporary main-stream society holds for the American Indian continues to be in direct relationship to the distance in time from the serious contemporary issues and people. Indians and Indian issues continue to be studied only in history or anthropology classes. These issues are seldom or never studied in the context of current events. When Indian people attempt to reduce the distance between the mythical Indian and modern society by living average lives with average dreams, hopes, difficulties, they find they are again pushed to the margins by the assertion that by being contemporary they have lost their Indianess or 'realness.'

Journalist/historian Carlos Cortes has posed the question: 'You ask… How do ideas about different races, cultures, classes get into people heads? Just pick a group and to see what is being taught about them and you will see what is taught is found in the media' (Lincoln Journal Star, 6/5/2002). In a study in the July 1999 issue of the Oklahoma

Indian Times, it was reported that many American Indian students interviewed indicated that they had been the victims of a significant negative cultural identity and violence. They also believed that most of these problems were created by the negative stereotypic presentation of Indian people in the mass media. It was their impression that they were generally characterized in the media as, 'poor, drunk, lazy, mean, dirty, savage, or dishonest'. It was also assumed by non-Indians that most Indians now come from rich casino tribes and that despite their 'wealth' they continue to receive monthly money paid for by the non-Indians taxes. In an introduction quiz given to students taking the Introduction to Native American Studies classes at Montana State University between 2000 and 2003 students were asked to list four things they believed

About American Indians. The most common responses were that all Indians received a $1,500 check each month from the federal government, they received a new pick-up truck and a check upon their 18th birthday, they received free university educations and were Alcoholic(Taylor). Attempts to correct these untruths are seldom successful. Of the Indian students surveyed in Oklahoma over 45% felt that the media's presentation of Indian people was the primary cause of discrimination and the growing anti-Indian sentiment and violence. Since the late 1980s a new Indian stereotype has been gaining acceptance world-wide. With social alienation and increased media attention on global warming people are seeking new answers to social problems. One promoted answer is the mystical, magical Indian medicine man (woman) who possesses an ancient primitive knowledge that can, in the hands of the right Anglo, cure all the social, spiritual and physical ills of the world. This began in the U.S. but as American Indian communities rose up in opposition to the co-option of their spirituality the new 'Indian of choice' was found in the jungles of Central and South America. Again, it is a perceived distance from the contaminating influence of the modern world that is most desired. Indian new age shamen usually are promoted as having been raised in some remote location, hidden away from modern Anglo society and taught secrets that have been hidden from white eyes for over 500 years. Unfortunately this is as much a myth as the Plains Indian warrior. New Age practitioners are quick to indicate that this is a "positive" depiction of Indian society, but in reality it is as emotionally damaging as the heathen savage images. All unrealistic depictions of Indian people as ancient children of the forest, primitive mystics, or supernatural spiritualists perpetuates, enhances and reinforces the cultural divide between mainstream society and Indian people. The result is that this also presents the American Indian child with an equally misconstrued image of what it means to be 'Indian' This new henomenon is predominantly found in the bored elite of the Western world and unfortunately in Mexico and other parts of the America's, positive stereotypes and thinking about the native populations is virtually unknown. Here the general opinion of *Indios* is that they are alcoholics, they smell bad, they are stupid and the main reason of underdevelopment of most of the Latin American countries. Little or nothing is done by the governments to correct this opinion.

Stereotypes have to be taught, and are imparted to children through their education, both official and unofficial. The outcomes produced by the imposition of both negative and pseudo-positive stereotypes on children are dramatic, both for the Indian child and the non-Indian child. For the American Indian child the result is often devastating. A massive corpus of research in the U.S. has been compiled on the negative effects of low self-esteem produced by these stereotypes. Along with increasing school drop-out rates, low self-esteem has been linked to other social problems experienced in many indigenous communities across the Americas. In many American Indian reservation communities, poverty is substantially above nation levels and unemployment is the highest of any ethnic group in the entire United States. According to Education specialist Margaret Szasz:

> Indian students…felt that their teachers and non-Indian classmates had little sympathy for them. They were taught the culture and history of mainstream, non-Indian America, and from this perspective they learned that they were either non-entities or worse, 'savages' as textbooks continue to describe them even in the 1960s' (Szasz 1999: 104).

Sociologists agree that significant emotional damage is done to any child that is placed in a system that forces them to be exposed to negative images and information about their culture. This is true for children in the US as well as for children in Mexico or the rest of Latin America. Irreparable damage is done when a child is made to question the very norms and aspects of their culture that they historically took the most pride in. On one hand a child is required to accept, at face value, the infallibility of the state government, the education system and information presented in the mass media. Then, they are confronted with information from this system that indicates that their ancestors and families were/are evil or sub-human. The result is an increasingly disenfranchised and marginalized indigenous population and a majority non-Indian culture that remains incapable of healing the wounds of the past or moving into a future that provides equal benefits for all. Because the media has created much of the problem, and continues to create and perpetuate negative stereotypes it will remain for them to begin the deconstruction of past fictions. The media must imitate strategies to create a more realistic representation of the indigenous peoples of the Western Hemisphere.

Unfortunately, until majority populations join their minority cohort and stand up to demand that educational systems, state governments, and the media both correct past misrepresentations and stop the production of negative representations and until they exert pressure in the economic framework, Western society will not heal and the ramifications of pushing the first peoples of the Americas to the borders of society will only increase. As social science teaches, the measure of a society will always be judged by how it treats its weakest and most disenfranchised members and the measurement of Nation States in the Americas falls far short of it projected ideals.

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Peter Verstraten

Representation as process: a film of the /cloud/

In the eyes of a film scholar, the discipline of archaeology is bedevilled by the success of blockbusters such as the *Indiana Jones* trilogy (Steven Spielberg 1981, 1985, 1989), *The Mummy* (Stephen Sommers 1999), and its sequel *The Mummy Returns* (2001). The interest the protagonists of these films display in ancient cultures predominantly functions as an occasion for exciting adventures. Watching these films gives the impression that archaeology is funny and risky business instead of serious affair. Nevertheless, film can teach us what is at stake in the field of archaeology, when one is prepared to look beyond the popular and hackneyed legacy of Indiana Jones.

In this article I want to address three questions. First, what does it mean to be a scholar in general, and, more specifically, a scientist who digs into the past? Second, how 'dead' are things from the past? Three, what's wrong with the word 'representation' in the plural? I want to suggest an answer to the first two questions via the detour of cinema. For the third question I delve into the discipline of anthropology, which might be considered as a sister-discipline of archaeology. Finally, I want to round up things by discussing the anthropological film *El Rebozo de mi Madre* (2005) by Itandehui Jansen.

Being a parasite

A peculiar tendency in cinema of the 1990s was to incorporate the name of the original author in the title of an adaptation: *William Shakespeare's Romeo + Juliet* (Baz Luhrmann 1996), *Mary Shelley's Frankenstein* (Kenneth Branagh 1994) and *Bram Stoker's Dracula* (Francis Ford Coppola 1992).[1] Such titles are on the one hand, rather pretentious. By including the original author in the title, the film seems to present itself as the definite and highly faithful version of the novel. On the other hand, the title can be taken in an ironic way, since at times the filmmakers seem to ignore the literary source deliberately. In those instances, the films reveal themselves as clear signs of their own times. I aim to spell out that while Bram Stoker wrote *Dracula* in 1897 when film was

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[1] See Corrigan: 165.

just a recent invention, the film *Bram Stoker's Dracula* is to be considered as a comment upon one hundred years of cinema.

Many people are disappointed by Coppola's version, and I can fully understand their critical attitude. One reason is predictable: when you are not addicted to horror films, Coppola's film is probably not your cup of tea and you dislike the nasty scenes with coffins and rats and so on. But the antagonism goes deeper. *Bram Stoker's Dracula* is also a noisy spectacle. At best you can **admire** the picture for its bold and daring images, but it is not really a film to love. For more than two hours we are bombarded with a plethora of images and all kind of cinematic tricks are included. Moreover, some of these tricks are quite disorienting. *Bram Stoker's Dracula* is, as Thomas Elsaesser points out correctly, a 'showing off' film (see Elsaesser: 203). The film calls out to its viewer: 'See me, see me as a spectacle full of superb technical devices.' For the spectator who is visually literate, there is a huge amount of intertextual references to be discovered, from Renaissance paintings to a plenitude of film scenes.[2] Apart from being a case of showing off, do these references also make sense?

In the scene I want to discuss Dracula has moved to Londen in 1897, after he has seen a photograph of Mina, a citizen of the British capital. Dracula recognized her as the reincarnation of his former love Elisabeta. He appears in the streets of London in the guise of prince Vlad, knowing that Mina will pass by. While he is waiting, a boy exclaims out loud: 'See the cinematograph, the amazing new invention.' Then the prince sees Mina walking in the crowd and he wants to attract her attention. In a hypnotic voice, he says: 'See me, see me now.' Because of a near simultaneous appeal to be seen, the scene creates an analogy between the invention of cinema and the figure of the vampire.

In a next scene, Dracula and Mina meet each other in a space where early films are being exhibited. A white wolf enters the space and causes an uproar among the spectators. The wolf who is under the influence of Dracula, walks in the direction of Mina. We then see a shot of Mina's frightened face. In the reverse shot we do not see the wolf as we might expect to see, but Dracula. However, we not just see Dracula, for in the left half of the shot there is a projection of an early film visible, namely *L'arrivée d'un train en gare de Liotat*. This short film about the arrival of a train by the two Lumière brothers is said to have shocked its early spectators for they feared that the train might run into the theatre. Hence, Mina's face is frightened for two reasons. She is shocked by the warm contact between wolf and prince, sensing that there is something enigmatic about the identity of the strange man. At the same time, she is shocked by the cinematic image. Once again, Coppola establishes an analogy between the figure of the vampire and cinema.

The question remains: What does this analogy between vampire and cinema entail? The vampire is known as the undead who feeds himself with the blood of living women.

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[2] Elsaesser (197-98) noted no less than sixty references.

In other words, he is a true parasite. But isn't film itself, Coppola seems to suggest, not a kind of vampire as well? Taking into account the multitude of references to paintings, film techniques and film scenes in *Bram Stoker's Dracula*, the film literally feeds itself by deriving influences from other visual sources. One can also put this in a negative way: Coppola's film sucks the energy out of art and other films in order to live itself. By way of this strategy *Bram Stoker's Dracula* confesses that it is devoid of originality. Not only is the plot derived from a novel but its imagery is derived from existing sources and devices as well. In its sheer unoriginality, *Bram Stoker's Dracula* is showing off all the wealth and potential of hundred years of cinema. In the process of showing off, the film is parading its own bloodlessness. The film seems to tell us that any filmmaker in the era of postmodernist eclecticism is a kind of vampire. This 'message' turns Coppola's film into a self-critical endeavour. *Bram Stoker's Dracula* is not just a blockbuster movie that should attract a big audience to earn back its investments, it is also a representation that shows the parasitical process of feeding itself. The films seems to excuse itself: 'I can't help citing and imitating other images and scenes, for it is in my nature.'

We can expand Coppola's lesson beyond cinema. As a filmmaker compares to the figure of the vampire, does this comparison not also apply to the scientist to some extent? An archaeologist makes a living out of digging up dead things from under the ground. To put it bluntly: Does this activity not make him or her a kind of vampire? Okay, I will admit immediately that he or she is a vampire with good vibrations and a friendly face, but a kind of vampire nonetheless. What Coppola's film suggested to me as a literary and film scholar is that I am at a loss as soon as my sources run dry. Of course, we all 'know' this, but *Bram Stoker's Dracula* is of interest because it included this knowledge into the product it is. Owing to its self-reflexivity, Coppola's film shifts representation as just a product into representation as process. On dvd's and television-programs we often see as a special feature the making of the movie at hand, *Bram Stoker's Dracula* is broader than this: the film itself is in part a making of cinema. This lesson does not yet make the film an ideal picture, and the reason is easy to guess. As full-blooded horror, the film falls short in consideration for any of its victims. Therefore it is appropriate to turn to a film that does not roam in the world of doom and death, but breathes life into death.

Juxtaposition of animate and inanimate

Viaggio à Italia (Roberto Rossellini 1953) is about a British couple, played by George Sanders and Ingrid Bergman, whose marriage is falling apart as soon as they are torn from their daily environment. During a travel together to Naples the distance that separates them seems only to aggravate day by day. Katherine Joyce notes: 'Everything seemed perfect, but now that we are for the first time alone, we appear to be strangers to one another.' The emotional life has been sucked out of their relation. Their states of mind contrast with the atmosphere in Naples: Alex Joyce is a man of timely schedules,

but Naples is a city with a *dolce far niente* attitude – go with the flow. The city is alive with sounds. When the married couple is in the apartment where they are staying, we hear how sounds from outside penetrate their home. The noises only contribute to the discomfort of the two strangers.

The film is directly of interest to archaeologists for the three excursions made by Katherine and the one she makes with Alex near the end of the film. The first visit is to an archaeological museum with Greek sculpture, copied by the Romans. The sculptures, filmed by a mobile camera, introduce the topic of the imbrication of animate with inanimate. As sculptures they represent stillness, but the camera at the same time shows sculptures that are caught by action. The scene ends on an image of a little dog barking. On the one hand, the sculptures are frozen in time, on the other hand the attentive and mobile camera seems to breathe life into these blocks of stone. Hence, the camera work revitalizes stillness.

Katherine's second expedition is to ancient rocks of pre-Christian religion. When she is driving her car on the way to the sightseeing, the shots indicate how she looks at Neapolitan street life. She sees a funeral procession, but this procession is intercut with shots of pregnant women, walking in the streets. This scene once again emphasizes the idea of animate versus inanimate, that is: womb and coffin, birth and death. On her third trip, Katherine visits the volcano site. She sees steam rising from the hot earth, and there are shots of hot mud with air-bubbles. The perpetual threat that the earth really will come to live, that is that the volcano will erupt, parallels living earth with potential human death.[3]

All the sightseeing by Katherine is marked by a constant juxtaposition between life and death. This juxtaposition is perhaps even clearer expressed in the scene where she sees baby carriages and then comes across heaps of death-skulls and skeletons. The Neapolitan woman who accompanies her mentions her meanwhile that she so much wants to have a child. In fact, all Katherine's solo visits are a build-up to the scene where she sees, in the company of Alex, excavations taking place in Pompeii, just after they have decided to have a divorce. The couple is looking on how a cast in plaster is made of two people who were literally surprised by death: they were captured at the moment they died. We see the process of two ancient people being reconstructed; they are, as it were, brought 'back to the future'. While this process is taking place, Katherine is visibly overwhelmed by the sight of it. We do not know exactly why she is moved so much. Rossellini's cinema is not one of clear cause-and-effect relations. We can read psychology in his scenes, but his films do not beg for psychological motives. What we can distil from the film so far, is what I tried to illustrate before, the permanent oscillation between animate and inanimate. Everything that Katherine encounters in Naples, or

[3] The audio commentary on the dvd (BFI-edition) of *Viaggio à Italia* by Laura Mulvey also mentions how Katherine's sightseeing is marked by the juxtaposition of life and death.

in the vicinity of the Italian city, shows the two poles of life and death as twin brothers. Almost everything, for the marriage between Alex and Katherine is an exception. While every material object around her, even when presumably dead, seems to pulsate life, her relation with Alex is at a dead end.

The constant interaction between life and death tempts us to reflect upon the medium of cinema itself, since film is at the threshold of the dead and the living, or should I rather say with a wink to *Dracula*, the undead. In his *Camera Lucida* Roland Barthes associates photography with frozen time, with a 'That-has-been', meaning that the photographic image has been relegated to the past (Barthes: 79). Photography is characterized by the pose. With cinema, posing becomes passing (*ibid*.: 78). Film is the recording of past events, but it is essentially also moving picture. Since film moves forward in time, its photographic immobility is abolished and replaced by an illusion of an eternal presence. In contrast to photography, film is, therefore, never only a thing from the past. Every projection brings 'dead' actors back to the here and now. At the same time, Rossellini's self-reflexive cinema is so preoccupied with images from the past and excavations, that the very interconnection of life and death applies to archaeology as well. Excavated dead people are not only part of the past, they become revitalized in the present. The cast in plaster moves Katherine so much, I would suggest, because this dead material from the past has much more life in it than her deteriorating marriage.

In Rossellini's meditative 'road movie' the old past of Naples is brought to life and thanks to the relics the two British 'mummies' seem to consider their own emotions. *Viaggio à Italia* shows what archaeological treasures can do to people. Rossellini's film retraces the effect of archaeology. The fact that dead things can reanimate people suggests that these remnants from the past still have life in them. *Viaggio à Italia* illustrates how archaeological objects speak to us. The film is a representation of how something presumably old and dead can have an emotional impact upon people who live in the here and now. If we were to take Rossellini's film as a guideline for archaeology, it would be reason to cherish the objects as careful as an anthropologist cherishes his/her object of study.

I hope you see where I am getting at with the example of Rossellini's film. Anthropologists study actually living people and that may be the reason why they have felt obligated to spend many hours discussing the problem of how to represent their objects of research. The goal of a 'good' anthropologist is to convey representations that testify to the respect to the people under scrutiny. If you see the discipline of archaeology through the 'lens' of Rossellini's film, you can consider archaeology as a true sister-discipline of anthropology. Hence, the problem of writing and representation becomes acute for archaeology as well.

First person, second person

In anthropology, the word 'representation' is usually used in the plural according to Johannes Fabian. In a seminal essay, called 'Presence and Representation', the anthropologist Fabian explains why he dislikes the term 'representations' (Fabian: 207). In emphasizing the plural, Fabian argues, we invoke representations as a product. However, an anthropologist should avoid at all costs to turn the 'other' into an object of knowledge. Or to rewrite this image-making into personal pronouns: 'I, the anthropologist, possess the expertise to make you into **my** object of knowledge and present your case to my fellow-scientists.'

What bothers Johannes Fabian about representations is the displacement that takes place in these roles. As long as the anthropologist is doing field research, he or she enters into direct contact with local citizens. Considering he is a good anthropologist, he treats the people he studies with respect and lets them speak for themselves. These local citizens are physically present and, in principle, their roles are reversible. The anthropologist is the 'I', the first person, who sets the agenda, but the people he studies are in the position to speak back. However, the moment the anthropologist starts writing down the results of his research a shift takes place. The presence of the local people evaporates. They become written material. And the nature of the conversation also undergoes a serious change. The talks with the local people become embedded in a more fundamental conversation: the anthropologist is still an 'I', but the role of the 'you' is now taken by his or her colleagues and the studied people themselves become third persons, subjects being talked about.[4]

Johannes Fabian's basic problem is to be paraphrased as follows: 'if I do proper anthropological work, that is, write about what I have experienced, I condemn the other with whom I was engaged during research to absence as if I suck the blood out of him/her.' What Fabian is searching for, is a means of representing the 'other' that shows this parasitical process. He pursues a kind of anthropological writing that explicitly acknowledges what *Bram Stoker's Dracula* implied: how the scholar making a representation risks feeding him- or herself at the expense of the object of representation. The basic difference between *Bram Stoker's Dracula* and the position taken by Fabian is that Coppola's film does not care for blood being spilled, while Fabian is careful not to wrong the people in question.

Fabian's problem is not easily solved. Can we provide representations which do justice to the anthropologist's object? Fabian discusses three options, which, according to him, are – I warn you beforehand – not valid enough. First, one can try to imitate the style of literary realism. The idea is that language functions as a transparent window to the world. However, poststructuralist and literary scholars have seriously criticized this

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[4] See for an insightful argument on 'first person, second person', Bal 165-194. In this chapter five she also discusses the work of Fabian.

notion. Realism does not equal reality and language can never function as a neutral mediator. Language does not just represent a world, in representing a world it is also constitutive of that world. This was the scandalous insight Hayden White offered to historians in the early seventies. Historical knowledge is presented in the forms of well-known narratives, dominated by rhetorical tropes such as metaphors. This insight necessarily implies that historical knowledge is determined by narrative structures. Knowledge is therefore never objective in itself, but coloured by the language we use. It is an insight that still bothers many historians to the present-day.

A second option for an anthropologist to present her or his results would be to write poetically. Writing beautifully about one's object of research is in itself a noble ambition, but the point of anthropology is to convey knowledge. The risk may even be that a poetic style sets up a smoke-screen and mystifies the situation of the people in question. The third option seems the most valid one, and is often used in anthropology. A scholar should present his or her results in the form of a dialogue with the local people. Fabian asks in a rhetorical way: 'Who could be against dialogue?' (Fabian: 216). Of course, Fabian is not against dialogue himself, but he distrusts its underlying implication. His distrust can be paraphrased as: 'If I present my results in the form of a dialogue, I automatically show that I did my best to pursue an exchange of equality.' Or to formulate this implication in a rhetorical question: 'Isn't the dialogic form not the ultimate proof that I respect the people in question, whose values and way of life are my object of research?' Hopefully you understand that Fabian distrusts the automatism of this assumption. In dialogue you put the people in the spotlight and you give them a voice, but what about your own contribution? As a scholar, you were the one who selected the themes, who chaired the discussion. So the lesson is that one should never downplay one's own role; one should not deny one's emotional involvement. The danger of an easy-going application of written dialogue as an ideal form is that the anthropologist obscures his or her own interests.

The best option might be to create a hodgepodge. One might intermingle one's own voice with the voices of others. One's own voice is important to emphasize that presenting one's results is not self-evident. We anthropologists, Fabian advocates, should think of representation in the singular, of representation as something that we actually do, as our praxis. Ways of making the Other are ways of making Ourselves, is one of his dictums (Fabian: 209). This idea that the anthropologist always writes in a distance from his or her object of knowledge should be part of the writing process. The best way to make the other present in one's own account, is to realize the other's distance from oneself and therefore to accentuate one's own position. The highest aim in anthropology is to make the Other present, and the bravest attempt is to reflect theoretically upon what it means to write and to represent one's object of study. Speaking for himself, Fabian says that in his unfinished work he best experiences the presence of the Other, for the distance between an 'I' and a 'you' who becomes a he or she is perceptible then. The flip-side of this notion is that this awareness obstructs the completion of his 'proper'

anthropological work. Work that is incomplete or relies upon a theoretical impasse is not really appreciated in academic circles. Fabian therefore wants us to revalue this form of what he calls 'not-writing', since for him, '[n]ot-writing is a 'moment' of writing' as well (Fabian: 220).

Built-in limits of representation

In the anthropological film *El Rebozo de mi Madre* Fabian's *cri de coeur* is answered, albeit in visual terms. The film is made by Itandehui Jansen, a Dutch woman, born from a Dutch father and a Mixtec mother. She visits the place which was once her home, Chalcatongo. In a press letter, the nostalgia of a place where time used to stop and linger is stressed. In the stories we hear from the local inhabitants, we learn about the irrevocable process of urbanization and modernization. This means that an old way of life is slowly disappearing. The press letter is right as regards to this process, but it is not what strikes me most in the film. In my interpretation I want to highlight two aspects, in particular. The first one has to do with narrative structure and the style of the film; the second one with the peculiar way the clouds are visualized.

After the titles, *El Rebozo de mi Madre* starts as an 'ego documentary', for the narrator is telling how faraway and close the rural part of Mexico is to her now. We gradually come to understand what the motor is for this film, and it is mentioned at the end of the film by the narrator herself. Her ambition was 'to construct a place for herself.' One might formulate this film project in a nasty way by saying that the I-narrator functions as a kind of parasite: she feeds herself with the voices of others to, and I repeat the quote from the film, construct a place for herself. This deliberately nasty formulation, however, is contradicted by the structure and the style of the film itself. The film has a meandering plot. After the beginning the I-voice falls practically silent. Owing to the relative absence of the narrator, the film lacks a clear red thread. Its structure becomes a constantly expanding narration of various people. Hence, the film itself is a kind of melting pot; the citizens of Chalcatongo tell different types of stories. We hear an anecdote about the wedding pie, we hear the sad story of a mistreated girl who tells in an utterly flat voice and hardly looks at the interviewer, we see a carnival feast without background story, only images, and so on. In the beginning the film seems like an ego-documentary, but this does not turn out to be the actual case. The fact that there is an internal narrator should not be seen as a weakness, but as a recognition that no film, and hence no documentary, can be told from an objective perspective. The maker writes herself into the picture.

As to the style, some of the stories are filmed in a remarkable way. Exemplary is a scene in the beginning, when the parents of the 'I' tell about the way they have met each other. Here the cutting is from close-up to close-up. Due to the cuts, they are visually apart from each other, but at the same time they look out of frame in each other's direction, as if they seem to speak to one another. Moreover, their sentences form a seamless

story, without breaks. Hence, despite the cuts in close-ups the parents are presented in a generous way, which is of importance since they originate from different ethnic backgrounds. An even more fundamental visual device is the frequent use of the two-shot structure. Two people tell about some crucial event or choice in their lives, and we often see one inhabitant of the Mexican village speak, but we also see the other inhabitant listen. Owing to such shot compositions, the stories receive a sort stamp of approval when we see the listener nod his or head in affirmation of the spoken words.

Apart from the narrative structure and the visual style, there is a second striking thing about the film. I quote from the press letter: 'The landscape, in which the different stories are set, is immensely powerful. The mountains seem to touch the clouds. People still feel connected to the natural forces that surround them.' However, the film attributes visually much more significance to the clouds than this quote suggests. In the beginning of the film, before the titles, we hear an unidentified voice-over, who tells about the Rain people and the Rain Serpent. We see impressive cloud-layers move rapidly. I am not familiar with the geography of Mexico, let alone its clouds, but the clouds have a surrealistic effect. The shots of the clouds are effective in supporting the stories about the Rain Serpent. The clouds are a natural phenomenon, but as spectators we get that the idea that some 'ghost' is pulling the strings, that someone is running the show. The clouds in Jansen's film seem unnaturally alive, as if they are being chased after. But the significance of the repetitive focus on the rapidly moving clouds goes beyond this.

In addition to a superstitious reading of the rapidly moving clouds, I refer for a more valid explanation to an art theory, put forward in 1972 by the French art critic Hubert Damisch in his *Théorie du /nuage/*. In this *A Theory of the /Cloud/*, the signifier cloud is put between slashes to emphasize that Damisch is speaking about clouds as pictorial elements, not real clouds. The thing about clouds is that a picture is never about them – they are part of the landscape being portrayed. Clouds function as a kind of hinge – as a hinge 'in the relation between heaven and earth, between here and there, between a world that is obedient to its own laws and a divine space that cannot be known by any science.'[5]

The clouds can fulfil their role first of all symbolically – they can suggest the divine or the miraculous. Nature has its own legendary stories. The story about the Rain Serpent in *El Rebozo de mi Madre* might be seen as an illustration of the existence of such legends. But a possible conceptual role of the cloud is more intriguing. In his discussion of the work of Damisch, Ernst van Alphen mentions a picture of a naked woman whose head disappears into clouds, taken from a book by Cesare Ripa from 1593. The woman is beautiful, but at the same time beyond beauty. These clouds indicate, Van Alphen claims, that there are limits to representation (Van Alphen: 6-8). This indication is supplemented with examples that evoke the illusion of endlessness. For clouds lack clear

[5] Damisch: 146. Quoted in Van Alphen: 5-6.

contours, they are without concrete substance, and thereby they illustrate the emptiness of heaven. In short, the point of Damisch' theory of the cloud is that by means of the cloud we get access to those realms that are visually unrepresentable, the divine, the unknowable, the unformed.

The clouds in Jansen's film seem to testify to the limits of representation as well. She offers a documentary about her too rapidly developing home of her childhood. In that sense, the film has an anthropological ambition in a relatively realistic fashion. The people portrayed can tell their own stories and we see the reactions of other inhabitants to the stories being told. This is in itself not enough to avoid the pitfalls mentioned by Fabian. Some stylistic devices, such as the frequent two-shot structures and the story told in turns by father and mother, might be quite acceptable according to Fabian's terms, but they still lack the criterion of self-reflexivity he wants to advocate. However, the repetitive images of surrealistic clouds can be considered in the tradition of Damisch as a built-in theoretical reflection. As I stated earlier, Fabian is aware that there are limits to represent the Other and therefore prefers unfinished work and attempts to reflect upon the absence of the Other so as to make him or her present in the process of reflecting. In a similar vein, the columns of clouds in Jansen's film point to their function, derived from art history, to suggest that there are limits to representation. On the one hand, Jansen's film is about a Mexican village that once existed in the memory of the narrator and is now in a continuing process of change. On the other hand, thanks to its surrealistic clouds, Jansen's film acknowledges that there are limits to represent the life in a Mexican village as it has been and as it is now. Because of this acknowledgement, I would provide *El Rebozo de mi Madre* with a subtitle: *Película de la /Nube/.*

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Itandehui Jansen

Practicing Ñuu Sau Poetics in Independent Transnational Cinema

Film communicates and creates meaning through the use of aesthetic form and dramatic composition. Mainstream cinema has developed a very particular language in which different genres have their specific codes and conventions. Hollywood – both 'classical' and 'post-classical' – has privileged the Aristotelian three-act structure (Bordwell, Staiger and Thompson 1985; Thompson 1998). A plot is constructed in terms of cause and effect, centred on a hero who has to overcome a number of obstacles in order to achieve his goal (Field 1984; Vogler 1998; Tierno 2002).

As a consequence of globalisation, the codes, rules and conventions of Hollywood have spread all over the world. This specific film language is passively learned and recognised by a worldwide audience and analytically taught to both filmmakers and critics, in respectively film academies and departments of film studies (e.g. Bordwell & Thompson 2004; Nelmes 2003; Rabiger 1998; Travis 2002; Wohl 2002). Consequently, films that prefer other forms and structures are at risk of being misunderstood, undervalued, and hardly distributed. This applies to a vast spectrum of film forms, varying from experimental or cult cinema to products of 'Non-Western' cultures (cf. Verstraten 2004). Due to the same processes of globalisation and migration, a significant part of 'Non-Western' film production has shifted to the 'West', as more and more 'Non-Western' filmmakers are themselves either living, working, or receiving funding within Western Europe or the United States, and consequently operating beyond national boundaries. Most of them are working independently, that is to say, in the margins of the mainstream cinema productions of their host countries. Hamid Naficy, in a seminal article, characterizes this 'independent transnational cinema' as follows:

> My examination of the transnational film genre is focused on the films made in the past two decades by transnational filmmakers who live or make their films in Europe and the United States. By and large these filmmakers are from the so-called Third World, and they operate independently, that is, outside the studio systems and the mainstream film industries of the host countries. As a result, they are presumed to be more prone to tensions of exile, acculturation, and transnationalism, and their films should and do encode these tensions (Naficy in Shohat & Stam 2003: 205).

Of course, there is an interaction and mutual influence between mainstream cinema and independent transnational cinema. The specific narrative structures of independent

transnational films on one hand elaborate on, and, on the other, break with mainstream cinema conventions. The context of cultural plurality and tension, in which most independent transnational filmmakers have to work, inspires and pushes artists to develop new aesthetics and narrative strategies, which challenge and go beyond the dominant paradigms.

Working as a migrant filmmaker myself, I experienced these tensions to great extent while working on the documentary '*El Rebozo de mi Madre*', situated in Ñuu Sau, the Mixtec region in Southern Mexico. In this reflection, I will focus on how the practical, dramaturgical and artistic solutions that shaped this film, are related to the cultural and ideological tensions within the work and the process of realisation. Questions of dramatic structure and poetic form were no longer mere formal considerations, but became strongly linked to issues of address, of representation, subjectivity, etc. The production process of '*El Rebozo de mi Madre*' led to the search of Ñuu Sau poetics on the one hand and of an 'independent transnational style' on the other. As I am working both as a film scholar and as an active filmmaker, this reflection will combine a theoretical and analytical approach with a more practical (dramaturgical) perspective. The process of making a creative film is always strongly related to personal experiences. Documentary filmmaking is always influenced by the filmmaking process itself, as it is the result of ongoing events and of the immediate interaction between the involved participants. The circumstances that surrounded the production of 'El *Rebozo de mi Madre*' will therefore be an integral topic of reflection. In this paper I will highlight how the context of production, the multiple address, matters of representation, and the presence of cultural pluriformity influenced the aesthetics and structure of the film. I will explore the choices that were made with regard to these issues during the process of production (research, shoot, and post production). Although there does not exist a prescriptive independent transnational dramaturgy or style at all, the issues mentioned above concern and shape many independent transnational films and I will therefore contextualize and situate '*El Rebozo de mi Madre*' within the realm of independent transnational cinema. This case study should be seen as only one example of the many diverse challenges and creative solutions that shape independent transnational cinema.

The search for alternative poetics

Due to the context of production – making a film, even a low budget film, is a costly enterprise and the distribution of texts (film or literature) is regulated by commercial interests – most subaltern groups have no easy access to self-representation. Instead, most subaltern groups have been topic of representations within dominant discourses. In cultural studies, an important aspect of research has been the deconstruction of existing representations of and discourses on 'Non-Western' peoples in fields as diverse as literature, painting, and scholarship (history, anthropology). A general critique of these representations is their tendency to construct a distant 'other' in opposition to a 'self'

and therefore to view these 'others' generally as objects instead of subjects, a process highlighted as 'Orientalism' by Edward Said. While cultural studies could limit themselves to the deconstruction of dominant discourses and texts, creative authors are in need of (re)constructing own narratives, and thus of developing new representational strategies to counter existing stereotypes. Filmmakers are haunted by this predicament because cinema itself was constructed in intimate relationship with the historical development of Western economical-military supremacy. Robert Stam traces the origin of film back to the imperial project of Europe.

Spivak's question 'Can the subaltern speak?' might be reformulated in the case of film as: 'How can the subaltern use a medium that has been an oppressive tool and compliant with dominant discourses?'

Brian Winston points out that the camera has been developed according to European aesthetic values:

> Although influenced a millennium ago by the Arab scientists, for the last five hundred years the lens has been a prisoner and a product of the West. It is ground to produce images with single-vanishing-viewpoint perspective according to Western representational codes. The camera to which it is attached has a viewfinder so small that it works (is focused for example) most easily if individual faces are privileged. Indeed, David MacDougall has pointed out that filming interactions is quite difficult, especially if you are as low as you need to be to shoot most non-Western domestic scenes. The machine is produced by Western individuals to film Western individuals. And as I have documented elsewhere, colour filmstock and the TV colour system are designed by white people to photograph other white people. They are, literally biased chemically or electronically against persons of colour. No amount of sophistication, it seems to me, will allow a non-Western operator to produce anything but moving images almost entirely conditioned by, or, at best as Carpenter suggests, in struggle against the West. That is all the machine can do – even in the hands of powerful non-Westerners such as the Japanese (Winston 1995: 180).

While Winston and others are correct in pointing out the limitations of the medium in this respect, such a line of argumentation is also profoundly Eurocentric as it conflates the process of modernization and technologisation entirely with Western culture. If the lens can be appropriated into 'Western' culture, how come technology cannot be appropriated into 'Japanese' culture? The argument is based on a conception of cultures as being static, monolithic, essentialist entities.

Spivak correctly points out that the idea of a 'pure unspoiled culture' is a utopian construction, but this is as true for other cultures as for the West itself.

Film language (both narrative structure as cinematography) is certainly culturally conditioned and predetermined, but this does not mean it is a closed system with no possibilities for change or subversion of the medium. One only has to think of the D.O.P. for Spike Lee's *Do the Right Thing*. For this feature film he developed special colour stock and lighting techniques in order to film 'coloured faces'.

Several aspects of the medium even invite and open up the possibility of an alternative (non-Western) film language. Filmmaker and professor in film production David Mamet explains in *On Directing Film* that the story telling techniques of cinema have much more resemblance to the techniques employed in oral performances (by traditional storytellers) than with the written word, for example with respect to timing. It should be noted here that most of the living story-telling traditions are to be found in the margins or outside of Western Europe. Robert Stam states that the medium lends itself to manipulation of time and place as no other:

> Alternative aesthetics are multi-temporal in still another sense, in that they are often rooted in non-realist, often non-western cultural traditions featuring other historical rhythms, other narrative structures, and other attitudes toward the body and spirituality. By incorporating para-modern traditions into modernizing or postmodernizing aesthetics, they problematize facile dichotomies such as traditional and modern, realist and modernist, modernist and postmodernist. Indeed the projection of Third World cultural practices as untouched by avant-gardist modernism or mass-mediated postmodernism often subliminally encodes a view of the Third World as 'underdeveloped' or 'developing,' as if it lived in another time zone apart from the global system of the late capitalist world (Stam, in Gunerathne & Dissanayake 2003: 36).

Cinema is a problematic medium because of its specific historical and cultural development. Independent transnational filmmakers, therefore, will quite often search for a different way of telling their stories. Consequently, one of the concerns of independent transnational filmmakers entails the search for alternative film languages and poetics that permit the expression of different views on history, culture, identity, and lived experiences. An illustrative example is the case of the film *Smoke Signals*, which is one of the first Native American feature films with major distribution. Native American peoples have been usually represented in Westerns according to the hackneyed conceptions of the 'noble savage' and/or the 'wild savage' (Rollins and O'Connor 1998; Verstraten 1999, Taylor this volume). *Smoke Signals* engages the viewer in the ironic deconstruction of those stereotypical representations through the use of inter-textuality and self-reflexivity. At the same time the film uses a very particular editing technique that creates co-evalness between two different time lines, expressing a different (Native American) perception and conception of time.

Context of Production

From the start, '*El Rebozo de mi Madre*' had to reconcile at least three different audiences. On the one hand, the documentary was funded by the Netherlands Organization for Scientific Research (NWO) as part of the research project '*Mixtec city-states. Nature and development of indigenous socio-political organization*'. It should give an image of present-day Ñuu Sau society and its on-going cultural traditions in Southern Mexico. As such, it was clearly aimed at an audience of anthropologists, archaeologists and other scholars in the field of Mesoamerican studies. On the other hand, the film is

a highly personal document, as it is set in my hometown and therefore is permeated by the feeling of loss and nostalgia that I myself experience. I always hoped to reach also an audience of Ñuu Sau people living in- and outside the Ñuu Sau region. Yet, my experience as a migrant has also encouraged me to identify on a more general level with a 'transnational' migrant experience, and thus to also search for a connection with a 'transnational' migrant audience.

The idea for the film '*El Rebozo de mi Madre*' has changed over a period of time, subject to both circumstances and personal interests. In the third year of Film Academy (Amsterdam), I returned to Mexico and lived there for a couple of months. During this period I took up the idea to make a documentary film about 'household servants' (maids) in Mexico City. This idea had a strong personal motivation. My mother had left her village at the age of seventeen to work in Mexico City as a servant. This aspect of her life has been both a burden and a treasure to me. Her stories have made me very aware of social injustice, exploitation and oppressive structures, but they have also been a source of pain.

Somehow, while researching the topic, I always ended up in my mother's hometown: Chalcatongo, an indigenous village in the Ñuu Sau highlands of Southern Mexico. About ten years ago the road to Chalcatongo was finally paved. Ever since, changes follow each other at great speed. There is a bus-line going directly to Mexico City, very soon there will be a shuttle service to Tijuana (the North), ugly cinder-block buildings pop out of everywhere, and a huge gasoline station announces your arrival in Chalcatongo. Most of the villagers try their luck elsewhere, either in Mexico City or in the United States. For several reasons – one, being the pollution in Mexico City – just as many return to the village with money, new ideas and a different lifestyle. As the elder people die, more and more of the things I remembered with so much passion seem to vanish into oblivion. Instead of looking for maids in Mexico City who had left their villages, I decided I wanted to make a film about the people who returned, or stayed inside the village. As a migrant, I have developed a particular relationship to this town in which I am both insider and outsider at the same time. When you are far away, your homeland can easily become an imaginary place of mythical dimension. But, after all, one of the main reasons for people to migrate is the lack of jobs, the lack of water, the lack of schools, hospitals, and other daily necessities in the so beloved place of origin. With this documentary I wanted to grasp and treasure some of the beauty of a way of life that is slowly disappearing, without judging the necessary and irrevocable process of modernisation. Thus, from the beginning the film had a double, almost contradictory agenda. My intention was on the one hand to show life in Chalcatongo, yet at the same time explore certain aspects of migrant experience. On one hand I wanted to make a film that preserved and cherished an indigenous way of life in Chalcatongo. On the other hand I wanted the film to resonate something of the nomadic experience. This twofold perspective was very contradictory at times, because: how do you make a film about the migrant experience, while staying in one village?

Like most independent transnational films '*El Rebozo de mi madre*' didn't have the luxury of a big budget, and was made outside the mainstream cinema production in the Netherlands. On one hand the budget imposed certain limitations; on the other hand it encouraged a large amount of freedom, as the film was not restricted by particular television timeslots, or specific demands on the content and form by an institutional producer. Like many independent transnational filmmakers, I recurred to an artisanal mode of production, covering many of the production aspects myself, and involving family members in other aspects. The reason for this was twofold, on one hand it would greatly limit expenses, on the other hand this approach facilitated communication within the community. The film crew was very small, consisting of a total of two to maximum three persons. In the first shooting period I was doing the cinematography, and my mother operated the sound equipment. On a second trip, there was an external sound operator, and my mother concentrated on the interviews.

As my mother was well known by all the participants and is considered an insider to the village, there was an immediate feeling of trust and confidence. Besides, the absence of a professional film crew made a stay in the village for a longer period of time (6 months) possible, and this, of course, facilitated an investment in personal relations an thus fortified the existing trust and confidence. This approach led to very intimate interviews, which might not have been possible with a professional crew. Because I was working with digital video in the cinematography I tended to favour close ups; this particular aesthetics reinforced the feeling of intimacy and immediacy.

The artisanal approach also had a down side, though. As I had decided, mainly to limit expenses, to do all the pre-editing myself, the editing became a very long process. The film had no budgeted salaries and my working on a full-time teaching job, slowed down the moment of completion with several years. The last shooting period was in the spring of 2002, while we finished editing in 2005.

Though during this period I had the opportunity to watch some of the material, and think through the structure of the film, it was basically a break in the production process. The real editing, in the end was only a matter of weeks. Yet, unwillingly this situation also influenced the content of the film. Many of the original ideas and concepts for the film were forgotten or shifted to the background. While the migratory aspect was a crucial theme during the research and scriptwriting phase, during the editing family relations came to occupy this position. This was not an entirely conscious shift, but was probably related to the fact that in the meantime I myself had become a mother and was in daily life much more concerned with aspects of family life. An editor would have kept more distance to the work and could have integrated the pre-existing themes with the new ones. In this sense the final product would have benefited from the possibility to work with a professional editor from the beginning over a larger period of time (but this would have needed a significantly larger budget).

Matters of representation

Film is an obvious representational medium wherein cinematic choices (from subject matter, to where to place the camera, and what music to use – or not to use -) in the end construct meaning. Every single choice made – and not made- along the way participates in the mediation of reality through film. Generally, this is considered apparent in fiction films, but documentaries are often confused with reality itself. Filmmakers and audiences tend to forget that the documentary film can never be more than just another mediated perception and representation of reality.

The insistence on a 'pure' documentary truth becomes very clear in discussion on what is and what is not 'true' documentary filmmaking, what is and what is not 'allowed', which approaches would and would not be considered 'manipulation' which seems an absurd discussion if one apprehends that documentary films are at most constructions and discourses on reality. This discussion was at the heart of the Palestinian-Dutch film *Ford Transit* (Hany Abu Assad 2003), which uses as a specific strategy the mixing and subverting of the documentary and fiction genres. While the film questions with these tactics the production and construction of images, and at the same time emphasizing the asymmetric power relations in regard to the access to reality and self-representation (a Palestinian filmmaker cannot film checkpoints in the same manner as Israeli filmmaker Shalev did in the film *Checkpoint*), the critics limited themselves to discussion on whether these tactics coincided with 'real documentary' or if they should be considered manipulative.

Through its mode of financing (NWO) and because of its topic, '*El Rebozo*' at first sight could be considered an ethnographic film. Accordingly, I was very aware of the representational problems existing within ethnographic cinema. That genre has in my view two major problematic aspects: first of all the inherent 'truth claim' and its totalizing effects, and secondly its construction of a 'distant other' in relation to a dominant 'Western' self. With this in mind I wanted to avoid in any case a film that was going to show a generalizing truth on 'the Ñuu Sau identity'. Somehow I wanted to make clear within the film that the film was the result of a very particular, personal and situated perception of the Ñuu Sau world. For this reason I chose to introduce my character within the film. Explicit use was made of a Dutch voiceover, creating distance, to situate the author, and therefore the perspective, of the film. Yet while this voiceover seems to be the authorial voice of the film, it is embedded in a Ñuu Sau text, creating conflict on whom or what is in the end the overarching 'authorial voice'. Such contradictions invite the public to view the film in different, even conflicting ways, and resist an essentialist reading. For example, in regard to the changing of the landscape from a rural community to a much more urbanized space, the characters of the film have very different standpoints, varying from neutrality (now both kinds of spaces coexist), to pride, or nostalgia. The same is the case with the perception of marriage: is it a social duty? Is it a symbolic exchange? Or is it a matter of true love? The different stories and opinions explore all this

different aspects, again resisting a monolithic reading of the function of marriage within Ñuu Sau culture, constructing it instead as a personal experience subject to change.

On a different level I also tried to subtly point out the construction of the cinematic text. The film makes use of formal aspects belonging to the fictional genre, like the shot – reverse shot, the use of fast and slow motions, dramatizing music, and staging of scenes. The viewer is for example invited to question: how was the bus scene shot? After all, it is unlikely that the filmmakers could be simultaneously in-and outside the bus. The personal voiceover every now and then reminds the viewer that the film explores personal preoccupations from a very particular perspective.

In order to avoid –minimize or at least make apparent – the inherent 'othering' of this genre, I made a number of decisions. A very clear and conscious choice was the limitation of ritualistic imagery. Rituals are only in the background of the film as part of a 'normal environment', they do not receive particular attention, nor explanation. For example, one of the participants gets married during the film. The ceremony is filmed, but no attention is paid to its symbolic meaning, structure or function. The wedding instead is embedded in a love story. Whether one identifies the images as a ritual of matrimony depends to large extend on one's knowledge of Ñuu Sau culture, privileging in this sense insiders (a Ñuu Sau audience) over outsiders.

The choice for the style of the film, stemmed directly from a concern with representational and ideological aspect. From the start, I excluded a 'voiceover' documentary (a scientific lecture with pictures) that was going to tell an audience 'the truth' on Ñuu Sau culture and traditions. I also excluded a Direct Cinema approach in which the camera invisibly records 'what's going on' but simultaneously denies to a large extent agency to its participants, who mostly don't interact with the camera, but instead are being 'shot' from a distance. Following the idea that 'speech acts' hold a certain amount of agency, I chose a form in which interviews play a key role.

As language is a crucial aspect of representational strategies, I decided to conduct the interviews as much as possible in *Sahin Sau*, the Ñuu Sau language. First of all, this choice was an assertion of an indigenous language that has been institutionally denied and discriminated against. But it also placed the participants in a better subject position, as they were able to speak more fluently in their own language while I as a filmmaker, not being fluent in Sahin Sau at all, was greatly dependent on participants, interviewer and translator. While conducting the interviews much effort was made to give equal participation to women and men. In the cinematography particular attention was given to the framing of participants, filming as much as possible on, or right under eye-line, to encourage identification within an audience. The stories of the participants are personal stories to which audiences can relate on a personal level. Instead of asking for general aspects of Ñuu Sau traditions, rituals and culture, we asked the participants questions on their personal experiences in regard to life (education, family, growing old). The easy identification of an audience to these issues hopefully breaks down some of the harsh distinctions between 'self' and 'other'.

The issue of address

Many independent transnational films address specific local audiences (Third World countries, migrant communities etc.), but at the same time try to reach a global public. Depending on funding institutions, they might even have other specific target audiences (Non-Governmental Organizations, the academic world etc.). These diverse audiences require distinct cinematic approaches, as they have different background knowledge and expectations about the subject matter.

In his major monographic study on the subject, Hamid Naficy observes: 'It is unlikely that all of these differently situated and often antagonistic publics can be satisfied. And yet, as filmmakers with an eye to the market and to public recognition, they must somehow reconcile their publics' (Naficy 2001: 55). As mentioned before, also '*El Rebozo*' had to deal from the beginning with differently situated audiences. The expectation of different addressees is of course present in '*El Rebozo*' on an auditive level in the multilingual composition. As said above, for both reasons of academic interest of representational matters, I wanted to do as many interviews as possible in *Sahin Sau* itself. The bilingual reality of the region led to a final composition in both Spanish and *Sahin Sau*. The migratory aspect introduced Dutch and English as other languages present in the film.

A common technique to address different (even antagonistic) audiences is the use of multiple intertextual references, combined with hybridisation of narrative forms, and multivocality. Such references and hybrid forms may separate (Western) 'outsiders' from (Third or Fourth World) 'insiders' and give the latter a sense of recognition and empowerment. As mentioned above, references to Ñuu Sau rituals, stories and religious or philosophical believes are not, or hardly, exposed and explained in the film, instead they are referred to on a symbolic level, privileging indeed insiders.

In this sense the almost trivial conversation the participants have on their *nahuales* opens up a field of shared experience among insiders, leaving outsiders to wonder: what is *nahualismo*? The insider-outsider problematic is also present on different levels within the narrative structure. The film starts out with my mother's *Sahin Sau* voiceover, and continues with my own Dutch voiceover, causing a cultural disruption between generations. After the title the film shows my journey towards the town of Chalcatongo. While the motif of the journey will encourage the identification of an 'outsiders' audience' travelling towards the village, my memories in voiceover position me as an 'insider' to the village and stimulates the identification of community members and migrants. Thus the film on several instances tries consciously to explore and balance the existing tensions between insiders and outsiders.

Cultural pluriformity

As independent transnational cinema is always the product of the encounters and clashes between different worlds, these films are likely to incorporate elements (metaphors, tropes, symbols) from the different cultural realms in which they are embedded. The combination of different storytelling traditions and other (cyclical) conceptualisations of time and causality may result in the choice for non-linear or multi-linear narrative structures. These may entail an osmosis of past and present, the blending of reality with visionary experiences, ritual performances etc. Instead of one main hero, independent transnational cinema may, for example, foreground a community, as in the Mali / Mauretanian – French film *La vie sur Terre* (Abderrahmane Sissako 1998). This film shows how life in the village Sokolo goes on peacefully, without drama nor conflict, on the verge of the new millennium.

Not only narrative structures, but also elements from the visual repositories of native cultures may be incorporated and hybridised with mainstream (classical) cinematic conventions and thus create new aesthetics.

The narrative composition of '*El Rebozo de mi Madre*' was also a careful exercise in constructing an alternative Ñuu Sau poetics. Much use is made of symbols that have a special importance within the Ñuu Sau culture, like several forms of maize and related elements (tortillas, plowing, etc.). Drawing on stories of the participants themselves, but also on ancient Ñuu Sau pictorial texts (codices), the film tries to embed the characters and their stories in a particular natural environment. For the documentary *8 Deer & 6 Monkey* (1997) I had already explored the cinematic use of Ñuu Sau symbolism. In that film for example, trees were chosen as an image to refer to deceased warriors, alluding to the Mesoamerican concept of the *árbol de la vida* (also represented on the sarcophagus lid of Ah Pakal in Palenque). Similar metaphors are present in *El Rebozo*, of course especially in the chosen imagery of natural elements that accompany the accounts of *nahualismo* and of the Plumed Serpent.

In the structuring of the film, several religious festivities were used as markers of time. The film begins with the celebration of All Saints and ends with Carnival. The symbolic and social meaning of this will be certainly clear for insiders (Mexican audience). All Saints is connected to death, while Carnival is much more connected to new life and new beginnings. At the same time on the interview level the film was structured in themes, starting out with the theme 'education' and finishing with a theme of 'old age'. These contradictory movements between youth – death and old age – new life construct a cyclical movement that disrupts the apparent chronological order of time. While the film sets out with 'my own personal journey' promising a return towards an imaginary homeland, the outcome of this journey becomes of little importance once in the village. The principal 'I' character that begins the film disappears from the stage, and the stories of different villagers are theme-wise connected causing a new flow in the narrative where community experience takes over. The journey of the 'I' could be read

as a Deleuzian movement of affect towards a community, where a becoming can take place, and the 'I' necessarily disappears.

In a different reading the 'I' character can be seen as merely a narrative device instead of a real protagonist. As no other clear 'protagonist' can be distinguished, the question rises: Whose film is this? Suggesting as an answer: the village…

Family life and cross–generational relationships were highlighted by filming the interviews in pairs, either of married couples, but also of mothers and daughters, or different friends. The film thus foregrounds a multivocal and communitarian experience above the individual story and needs of a single presupposed protagonist.

The scenery of the region receives a central role in the film, capturing it as an overwhelming but never disempowering landscape. A particular cinematographic device is the use of fast motion for images of moving clouds. These images of moving clouds are the very first images of the film combined with a Ñuu Sau poetic text. This text makes a clear connection between the Ñuu Sau perception of a cultural identity (people of the rain) and the clouds. At the same time the fast moving, and continuously changing clouds can also be read as metaphors for movement and thus emphasize the impossibility of a fixed representation of identity. This aspect is of course also present in the images of carnival. Metaphors of a change and movement are present throughout the film. Images of tin roofs, laundry, and leaves quivering in the wind are recurring elements. The film's end points out this element of Ñuu Sau philosophy very specifically as one of the characters states: 'We only have a breath of time on this earth, and then we inherit it to our children.' The last images of children (on a bicycle, with a car wheel, and with a hoop) on one hand resonate with the words of the old man (the circular movements of the wheels echoing the cyclical movement of the earth), they also blend different symbolic meanings from different cultural realms (the wheel being non-existent in Mesoamerica). This imagery thus emphasizes the Ñuu Sau perception of life as something ephemeral, subject to change and of time as something cyclical but at the same time brings into play the hybridization and change of cultural signification.

Spivak is correct in pointing out that it is not possible to regain lost origins, nor to return to authentic roots. The projects of Independent Transnational Cinema are instead rather concerned with a conscious construction of an own narrative that is neither fixed nor totalizing, but that express alternative world views and life experiences. The search for an alternative Ñuu Sau poetics can be seen in this light, as an effort to construct multiple and changeable identities through art, cinema, science and literature.

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Part II Ñuu Dzaui Writing through Time

Gerardo Gutiérrez Mendoza

Four Thousand Years of Graphic Communication in the Mixteca-Tlapaneca-Nahua Region

Archaeologists who study Mesoamerican writing systems have typically done so by borrowing methodologies created by linguists specialized in Old World writing (Marcus 1992; Prem 1971; Prem and Riese 1983; Whittaker 1992). Such approaches are based on the basic assumption that writing systems are merely used to represent speech. Typical classificatory approaches to writing systems, define types such as 'phonetics'[1] or 'phonograms,'[2] (Dubois et al. 1983:234-35). Regardless of their usefulness as classificatory devices, these categorical approaches have proven inadequate for capturing the complexity of Mesoamerican writing systems (see Boone 2000:31-63). They are also symptomatic of a current polemic between those who consider 'real' writing to be limited to glottographic[3] systems, thus removing most Mesoamerican systems from consideration (exclusivists) and those 'inclusivists,' who believe that semasiographies[4] need to be considered as 'real' writing (see Urcid 2001:6). Evaluating communication systems based on rigid categories prioritizing phoneticism over other criteria disregards the majority of Mesoamerican inscriptions, carvings, and paintings. Here, I approach native graphicacy[5] using communication theory, as I am more interested in the general process of how ancient people transmitted cultural information graphically and not in the usage of a particular type of writing.

The Information Transmission Model

Perhaps the best-known communication model was first proposed by electrical engineer Claude Shannon in 1949, and subsequently reworked by Warren Weaver (Shannon 1948;

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[1] Speech sounds with a set of distinct symbols for every sound.

[2] Characters representing the smallest phonetic units of language capable of conveying a distinction in meaning.

[3] Systems based on the graphic codification of language sounds.

[4] Visual communication based on images representing entities or objects that are culturally specific.

[5] The ability to communicate through graphic devices. Graphicacy consists of a variety of techniques, ranging from pictures to graphs and diagrams. All graphics employ two-dimensional space to represent concepts and ideas. In graphicacy, the meaning is related to the spatial relation of symbols (Balchin 1976).
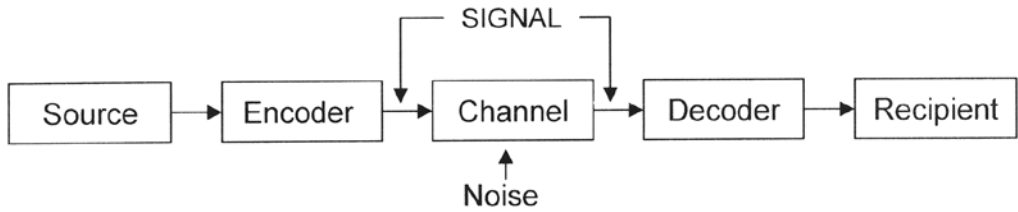
Figure 1. Shannon-Weaver-Lasswell's transmission of information model: 'Who says what in which channel to whom with what effect'.

Shannon and Weaver 1949). Shannon's original model was intended as an information transmission model, applicable for engineering purposes in telecommunications. Nevertheless, Weaver's interpretation, along with Harold Lasswell's contributions, succinctly described as: 'Who says what, in which channel, to whom, with what effect?' (Severin and Tankard 1997: 47), converted this model into one that could be applied to many fields, from psychology to political science (Cherry 1957).

The goal of any communication system is to transmit data to a particular destination. In its simplest form, the Information Transmission model consists of a source, a channel that conveys the message, and a recipient who receives the message. Practically speaking, this system will also include an encoder between the source and signal, and a decoder between the signal and the recipient (Figure 1). A distracting, but apparently inevitable, part of every communication system is noise. Noise is any unwanted attribute in the signal-channel portion of the system that interferes with transmission efficiency.

The strong advantages of this model were its simplicity, generality, and quantifiability. Such advantages drew serious academic attention to human communication and information theory, leading to further research. Nonetheless, the model has been criticized for its oversimplification of the human communication process and its disregard for meaning construction (Carey 1989; Ellis and McClintock 1990). This criticism motivated the emergence of many competing theories on human communication addressing 'meaning', primarily in the fields of semantics and semiotics (Kodish 1993; Ogden and Richards 1946; Osgood 1976). Considering the pros and cons of the original model, I believe it can be effectively adapted and applied to the study of Mesoamerican communication systems.

Mesoamerican Graphicacy as a Communication System

In the Mesoamerican world, I believe the primary source of events and stimuli recorded by any graphic technique was the sociopolitical, economic and religious reality of the *altepetl*, the Nahuatl concept for the primary political unit (García 1987; Gutiérrez
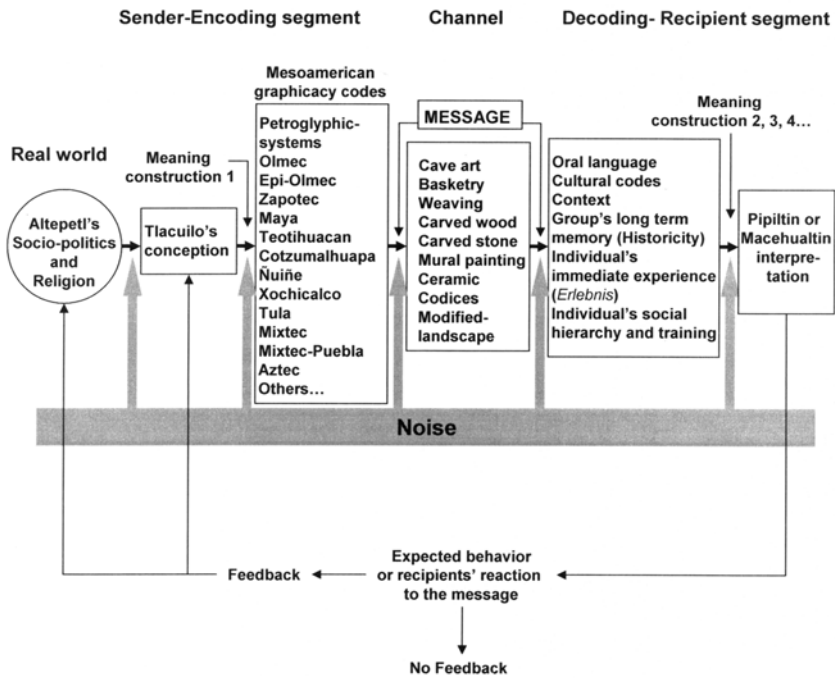
Figure 2. Mesoamerican transmission of information model.

2003; Lockhart 1992). The *tlacuilo*, Nahuatl term for scribe, painter and sculptor,[6] plays two roles in this model: first, as the original sender of the message, the one who tries to capture the reality of the *altepetl*, his/her own mental elaborations and/or the thoughts of a patron; and second, as the encoder of the message (Figure 2). The Mesoamerican tlacuilo possesses a basic corpus of conventionalized symbols with which the oral language and daily life experiences are converted into graphic language. Mesoamerican graphicacy has a variety of codes, ranging from petroglyphs, Olmec symbology, Epi-Olmec, Zapotec and Maya glyphs, and Mixtec and Central Mexican picture writing (Prem and Riese 1983). Even though these codes share many common and standardized features, they also have temporal, regional, cultural and language specific variations that we, as modern interpreters, have not yet understood nor accounted for.

Applying the Informational Model (Figure 2), a message consisted of a text with a meaning, which the tlacuilo intended to codify and transmit through the spatial arrange-

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[6] See Molina 1971; Siméon 1997. Mesoamerican languages do not have separate words for writing, sculpting, or painting (Urcid 2001: 4); there is a single verb to refer to all three actions, in contrast to European languages.

ment of two-dimensional, and sometimes three-dimensional, graphic symbols on a specific channel. The channel is the physical media on which the message is depicted: cave walls, wood, rock slabs, leather, paper, cloth, ceramics, mats, or even the landscape. The recipient played two roles: first, as the intended receiver of the message; and second, as the decoder of it. To decode the message, which ideally is to recreate the tlacuilo's proposed meaning, the receiver needs certain knowledge and skills. It would be necessary for the decoder to have some understanding of the specific oral language and cultural codes used by the tlacuilo; this is especially true for understanding combinations of semasiographies and glottographies. Graphic symbols may change meaning depending on the context in which they are presented. Context can change the meaning of specific symbols by the special combination of other accompanying elements or by a modified use of the spatial arrangement of the symbols.

In the creation of cultural codes and the capacity to understand ancient messages through time, a group's long-term memory plays an important role, especially if the graphic codes are used as mnemonic devices to assist the receiver's memory in recreating more detailed narration. If any sociopolitical event, such as migrations, wars and epidemics, causes loss of the long-term group's memory, later receivers will not be able to fully understand the message, even if they can 'read' it. Similar to this latter process, the living experience of the individuals [making reference here to the philosophic concept of *Erlebnis* (Gadamer 1988: 96-97) may improve or impede the understanding of the text. That is, if a possible receiver did not participate in a particular experience (such as a ritual in which secret and hidden meanings of graphic symbols were passed on), he/she may be lacking key knowledge to fully understand such texts, even if in principle, he/she can superficially 'read' them. For example, it is well known that the Maya made use of a secret language called Zuyua, which was used to test the noble background of aspirants to administration offices; it is likely that such esoteric languages were widespread throughout Mesoamerica and perhaps reflected in many ancient inscriptions.

Turning again to the receiver, it is important to note that he/she occupies a specific social position. In Aztec society, for example, there were *pilli* (noble) or *macehual* (commoner) and each had been trained accordingly to perform specific roles. For a message intended to be seen by multiple receivers, it is likely that individuals from different social hierarchies would assign different meanings to such text. In addition, receivers were not necessarily living people. Some messages may have been addressed to supernatural beings; among such messages were petitions and magic spells intended to protect the scribe or his/her patrons. In fact, the receiver and the sender may have been the same person. In this case, the codes may be individualized and only understood by the sender.

As mentioned above, the weak point of the original Information Transmission model is in semantics. 'Meaning' was unimportant from the mathematical point of view and the semantic aspects of communication were irrelevant to the engineering problem at hand (Shannon and Weaver 1949). Shannon and Weaver were only interested in how

accurately a message could be transmitted and not in how meaning is conveyed or how it affects behavior.

Critics of the model suggest there is no information or meaning in a graphic message per se. Information and meaning arise only in the process by which readers actively make sense of what they see, therefore meaning is a construction (Chandler 1994). If so, then 'Meaning Construction' is not solely restricted to the receiver. The sender also actively makes sense of the real world and actively tries to record it on a specific channel, using a code that makes sense to the intended readers. Thus, on the one hand, the first meaning construction is made by the person who is performing the sender-encoder segment of the model. On the other hand, the person who is performing the decoder-recipient segment of the model may construct not just one meaning, but multiple ones $(2, 3, 4…\alpha)$, every time he/she readdresses the text. The same applies in situations in which there is more than one recipient.

A message will not perform its function unless it is prepared in a legible and comprehensible way for the receiver for whom it is intended. So it is likely that the Mesoamerican tlacuilo had in mind the possible recipients at the moment in which the message was codified. Although archaeologists and epigraphers have invested great efforts in recording, describing, and interpreting Mesoamerican graphicacy systems, unfortunately, the ancient senders did not codify their messages with us in mind. This is why, as modern interpreters, we cannot be certain we understand the original purpose of the message, the intentions of the sender, and what he/she expected from the receiver. This last point is perhaps the least advanced line of research. For example, we do not know what a tlacuilo of the Middle Formative period expected from the intended receiver(s) looking at a Saint Andrew's Cross. Did our hypothetical sender expect reverence from the receiver, a body action, a verbal reply, no action at all? Perhaps we will never know it. A recipient's reaction to the message may or may not produce feedback. If feedback is produced, however, it may be addressed either to the tlacuilo or directly to the *altepetl* sociopolitical system within which the tlacuilo functions.

In the original Information Transmission model for telecommunications, the noise element only affected the channel-signal segment, causing distortion in the efficiency to convey the message. Nonetheless, in adapting the model to Mesoamerican graphicacy, it is possible that noise, as an altering element, may be present in every segment of the communication process. Noise may occur from a distorted perception of the reality on the part of the sender; a lack of mastery in understanding the graphic corpus on the part of the receiver; a lack of standardization in the corpus; and/or errors in the painting process, carving or sculpting of the message over the channel. Noise may also arise in the receiver's reaction to the message, especially with unexpected feedback and reaction to specific messages. Figure 2 displays a diagram adapting the original Information Transmission model to Mesoamerican graphicacy systems, specifically to those found in Eastern Guerrero.

Ancient Communication Systems of Eastern Guerrero

Here I address the development of graphicacy in Eastern Guerrero as an effort by indigenous groups who inhabited this area to communicate their ideas and interests. Eastern Guerrero (Figure 3), a set of narrow valleys along the Tlapanec River Basin in the Sierra Madre del Sur, is also known as the 'Mixtec-Nahua-Tlapanec' region, a name used in anthropological circles since the publication of Schultze-Jena's book *Indiana: Bei den Azteken, Mixteken, und Tlapaneken der Sierra Madre del Sur* (1938). Subsequent scholars have continued using this term to highlight the multi-ethnic complexity of this region inhabited by these three linguistic groups, as well as the Amuzgo of the Costa Chica region (Muñoz 1963, Matías 1997, Jiménez y Villela 1998).

The data presented here has been gathered during ongoing systematic research in Eastern Guerrero since 1999 (Gutiérrez 2002). A key site survey over more than 6000 sq km has brought to light unknown monuments carved with semasiographies, as well as providing me the opportunity to revisit other graphic evidence published decades ago in journals that are difficult to find.[7] For the study of the early Colonial period, I have made use of scanned images and 35 mm photographic slides taken from the original codices of Azoyú 1, Azoyú 2, and the Lienzo Genealógico de Tlapa-Azoyú, residing in the National Antropology Library (Biblioteca del Museo Nacional de Anthropología e Historia) in Mexico City. The other primary sources used were Colonial administrative documents consulted at the National Archives (Archivo General de la Nación) also in Mexico City.

Pre-Olmec Graphicacy[8]

From 8000 to 2000 BC, Mesoamerican peoples began experimenting with plant reproductive cycles and domesticated the basic triad of crops: corn, beans and squash, as well as others, like avocado. Although the archaeological record in Guerrero is poorly known for this period, regional exploration has uncovered fragments of Late Archaic human occupation, including possible campsites in the Huamuxtitlan Valley (Figure 3), as represented by the presence of triangular chert points and flakes and a lack of ceramics and obsidian. Several sites with rock carvings and paintings were also located that may date to the Late Archaic or Early Formative, such as several petroglyphs with geometric designs found at the sites of Zacualpan and Zapotitlan Tablas and the important site of Piedra Pinta-Totomixtlahuaca. Piedra Pinta consists of a rock outcrop along the Omitlan

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[7] All line drawings were digitized in Autocad from recent digital photos of the monuments. The author took the photos and rendered the drawings in Autocad, unless otherwise specified.
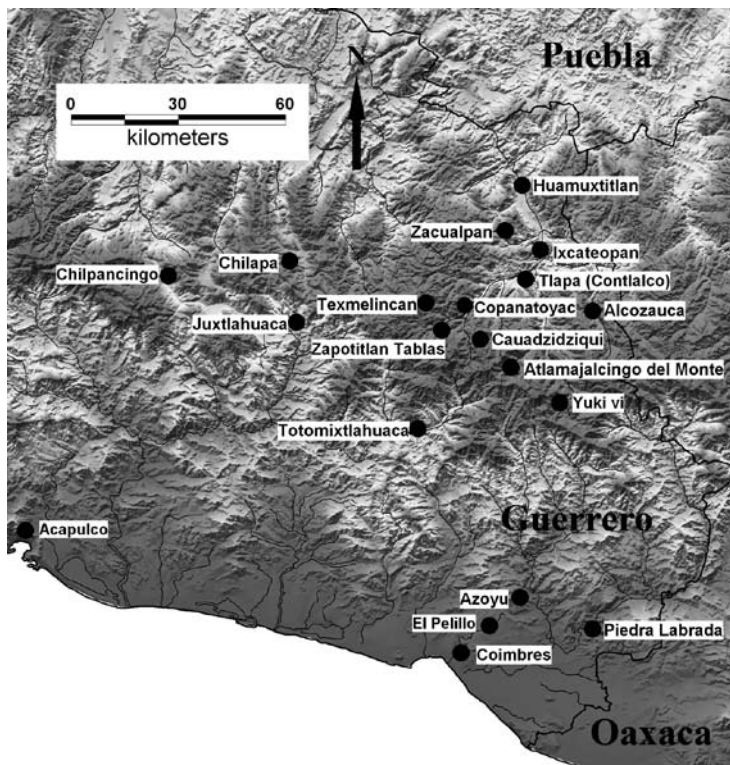[8] This section is based on Gutiérrez and Pye 2005.

Figure 3. Map of Eastern Guerrero

River, with a boulder 8 m long, 3.4 m wide, and 1.80 m in height (Figure 4). Its surface is completely covered by some 100 petroglyphs, with designs varying from a simple holes or clusters of hole to more complex geometric designs, including a double cross motif, which occurs in several places on the rock.

The other relevant example of early graphicacy in Eastern Guerrero can be seen in the Cauadzidziqui[9] rock shelter in Ocoapa (Figure 3), where more than 140 paintings were executed on a single rock face. Although the Cauadzidziqui paintings are framed in an area 25 m long by 5 m high, the majority are clustered together in a smaller section of some 21 sq m, where the wall has a large, flat, smooth surface (Figure 5).

The first layer of the mural consists of geometric motifs in red paint. Common depictions include squares and ovals with parallel interior lines. Also frequent, particularly in the upper half of the mural, are crosses and double cross designs – which are two parallel lines crossing the vertical at a perpendicular angle. All of the crosses are framed

[9] Cauadzidziqui means 'cave where one plays' in Mixtec.

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Figure 4. Schematic overhead view of the petroglyphic corpus of Piedra Pinta, Tototmixtlahuaca.

by a curved line that encloses the primary axes. This image is also found repeatedly on the Piedra Pinta-Totomixtlahuaca (Gutiérrez 2002) and has been reported from cave and rock paintings at Chalcatzingo (Apostolides 1987: 194). At various points in the mural, there are complex scenes in which simple human figures raise their arms; in one case a group of three figures raise their arms toward an element that looks like a sun. Other interesting elements in red include plant designs that appear to emerge from circles, perhaps depicting plants growing from seeds, although it is unclear which plant species is being depicted.

Figure 5. Pre-Olmec and Olmec paintings at Cauadzidziqui rock shelter (partial view).

How do we know that these graphic representations are Late Archaic or Early Formative? It is speculative to propose a specific date for petroglyphs and paintings, since such activities are a long-standing tradition in Mesoamerica and North America, particularly geometric forms. However, these designs are different from the better-known Classic and Postclassic iconography found in Eastern Guerrero. The strongest evidence suggesting that at least some of the petroglyphs and paintings are pre-Olmec in date comes from the Cauadzidziqui rock shelter itself.

Olmec Graphicacy

In 1989, ethnographer Samuel Villela published a brief article reporting an Olmec mural painting in the Mixtec town of Ocoapa, Guerrero. Villela recorded a complex mural of 140 motifs painted in red, white, and yellow. Since two of the largest, most elaborate motifs were executed in Olmec style, he believed the entire mural was Olmec in date (Villela 1989: 38-39). When my team and I visited the mural of the Cauadzidziqui rock shelter in 2000, we realized that the pictorial stratigraphy was more complex than Villela had realized. Two Olmec anthropomorphic characters painted in white and yellow actually overlay the red graphic symbols described above. Given that the mural is deteriorating due to water infiltration and that Villela's report was never fully published, we undertook a new recording of the images to better understand the different stages of the mural's creation. We developed a topographic map of the rock shelter and catalogued the images. Ultraviolet, red, and infrared lights were used to better identify hidden designs
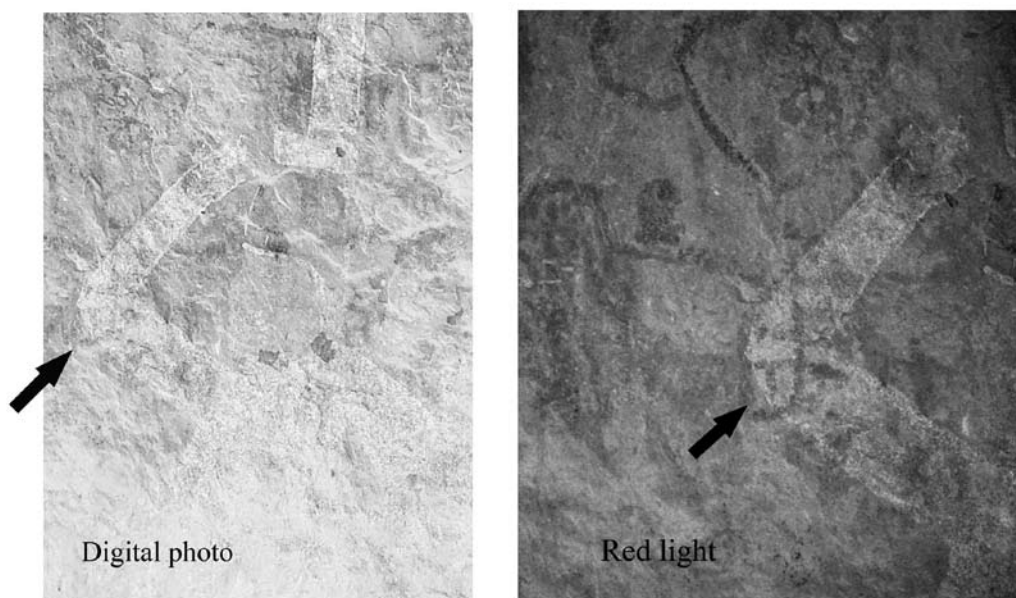
Figure 6. The red light demonstrates that the Olmec designs overlay the pre-Olmec images.

and to determine whether some images overlay others. In this case, the Olmec paintings in white and yellow cover images of geometrics painted in red, what we believe to be Archaic, or minimally Early Formative designs. Previously, Olmec specialists have suggested that red-painted motifs in Morelos and Guerrero were likely from the Classic period or later (Grove 1970a, 1970b).[10] Pictures taken in the cave with red light demonstrate that the Olmec style designs overlay the pre-Olmec images. This was especially evident in: 1) the headband of the main Olmec personage, 2) his body, 3) in the arm of the smaller figure (Figure 6), and 4) in the L-shaped object above the head of the smaller character. This Olmec 'graffiti' appears to be intrusive and provides valuable evidence for cultural stratigraphy on the walls of the rock shelter, dating at least two major phases of graphic messages in Eastern Guerrero, pre-Olmec and Olmec.

Figure 7A presents the secondary Olmec-style figure; it does not have well-defined features and is portrayed in silhouette. It consists of a human torso from head to midsection. The right arm is raised and bent 90 degrees at the elbow, reaching up, perhaps toward the L-shaped element above his head or as if protecting his face. The left arm

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[10] The next phase of research should include a comparison and evaluation of the known corpus of symbols from the caves of Guerrero and Morelos. While some of the red-painted symbols documented at the Oxtotitlan cave and Chalcatzingo may be Classic period in date, others are probably not.
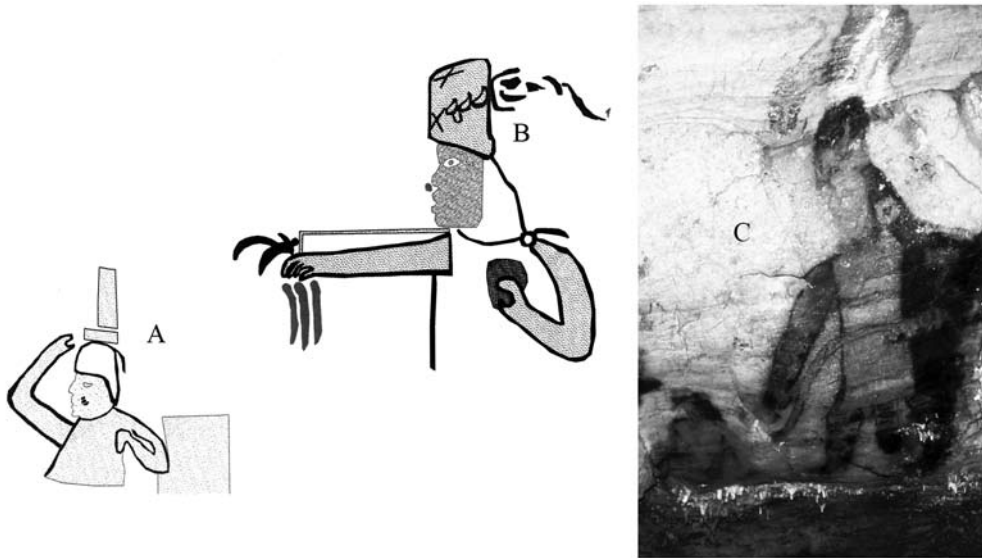
Figure 7. Olmec themes at Cauadzidziqui (A, B) and Juxtlahuaca (C), Guerrero.

seems to be doubled in an anatomically anomalous position, and the elbow seems to be leaning on some kind of rectangular block. The figure wears a helmet or headdress, with what appears to be a single tassel coming off the back; this headgear is reminiscent of those seen on the colossal heads of the Gulf Coast. Finally, atop the head of this individual is an inverted L-shape, formed by two rectangles.

Figure 7B depicts the primary Olmec-style character, an individual of larger proportions: the upper half of his torso, from the hip to the top of his headgear measures 1.80 m. The entire silhouette, his arms, and headdress are painted yellow, but the face and the headdress design are painted white and stand out sharply. Within the headdress are a series of symbols: a flame eyebrow, the cross-band motif, and a u-shaped element that may represent a zoomorph or earth monster.

The primary character's right hand extends horizontally toward the secondary figure. His fingers are curved down and appear to emit three lines of white paint. There may also be another small human figure emerging from his hand; this image is not very clear. The left arm is doubled and appears to be holding something, although one cannot tell what it is. There appears to be a series of orange-painted circles that might be a chest adornment; however, the use of orange paint is rare in this mural and may not be related to the yellow and white image. Given the shape of the headdress, the head of the individual appears to exhibit cranial deformation. The almond-shaped eye is formed by a lack of paint, as is the small design in the shape of the mathematical sign – a sigma – located between the eye and headdress.

Overall the pre-Olmec paintings at Cauadzidziqui include depictions of naturalistic elements: the sun, plants germinating from seeds, and human figures. As the Late Archaic people were seemingly interested in the phenomenon of plant development, the rock shelter was perhaps the site of cultivation rituals. In contrast, the Olmec style paintings focus on two particular personages, with a social hierarchy implied by the different scales used to represent them. The headdress of the smaller personage is plain, while the larger one has an elaborate and abstract representation from the Olmec pantheon. The smaller character also has three small white bands on its cheek, perhaps an ethnic identification, while the larger personage has a curvilinear sigma decorating its eye and cranial deformation in the Olmec style.

The theme of the Cauadzidziqui cave recalls paintings documented from the Juxtlahuaca Cave in the Muchitlan Valley (Gay 1967; Grove 1970a, 1970b). For, example, one scene depicts the domination of an individual dressed in Olmec paraphernalia over another smaller person, who lacks Olmec insignia (Figure 7C). In the case of Cauadzidziqui, the smaller personage is perhaps leaning on a bench, sprawled, and in a helpless position. Perhaps the L-shaped object on top of his head is a type of club, like that represented on Mon. 91 of San Lorenzo (Cyphers 2004: 159).

The Classic–Epiclassic Graphicacy

Teotihuacan style censers with the special nose plug depicted in Teotihuacan murals have been found at the sites of Contlalco, La Soledad, and Mezcala, all in the municipality of Tlapa (Gutiérrez 2002:118). Similarly, mold-made clay figurines have been reported in the town of Azoyú. Nonetheless, the most impressive Late Classic period corpus of native graphicacy found so far in Eastern Guerrero comes from the archaeological site of Piedra Labrada in the municipality of Ometepec (Piña Chan 1960; Manzanilla 1995). Piedra Labrada is a large site covering at least 49 ha. It lies 150 m above the valley of the Santa Catarina River, atop a ridge projecting from an escarpment of the Sierra Madre del Sur. Nineteen carved stelae and monuments are scattered throughout the site (Leal 1995). Some were carved from sedimentary rock, others from granite. Piedra Labrada sculptures depict diverse themes, with an abundance of zoomorphic and anthropomorphic representations. Large serpent heads, turtles, and felines are common. Anthropomorphic sculptures include hunchbacks (Figure 8N), porters bearing calendar glyphs (Figures 8J and 8O), characters wearing jaguar masks (Figure 8A), and ball court markers in the form of a man bent backward (Figure 9R). There is also also a slab depicting a Mesoamerican deity with goggle eyes, perhaps a Tlaloc representation (Figure 9O). Unfortunately, most of these monuments have been and still are exposed to the elements and rapidly eroding, making it difficult to see their designs.

At least six stelae have calendrical symbols. The most frequent is what Urcid (2001:156-159, 2005) has identified as the day glyph, 'Knot,' equivalent to the position
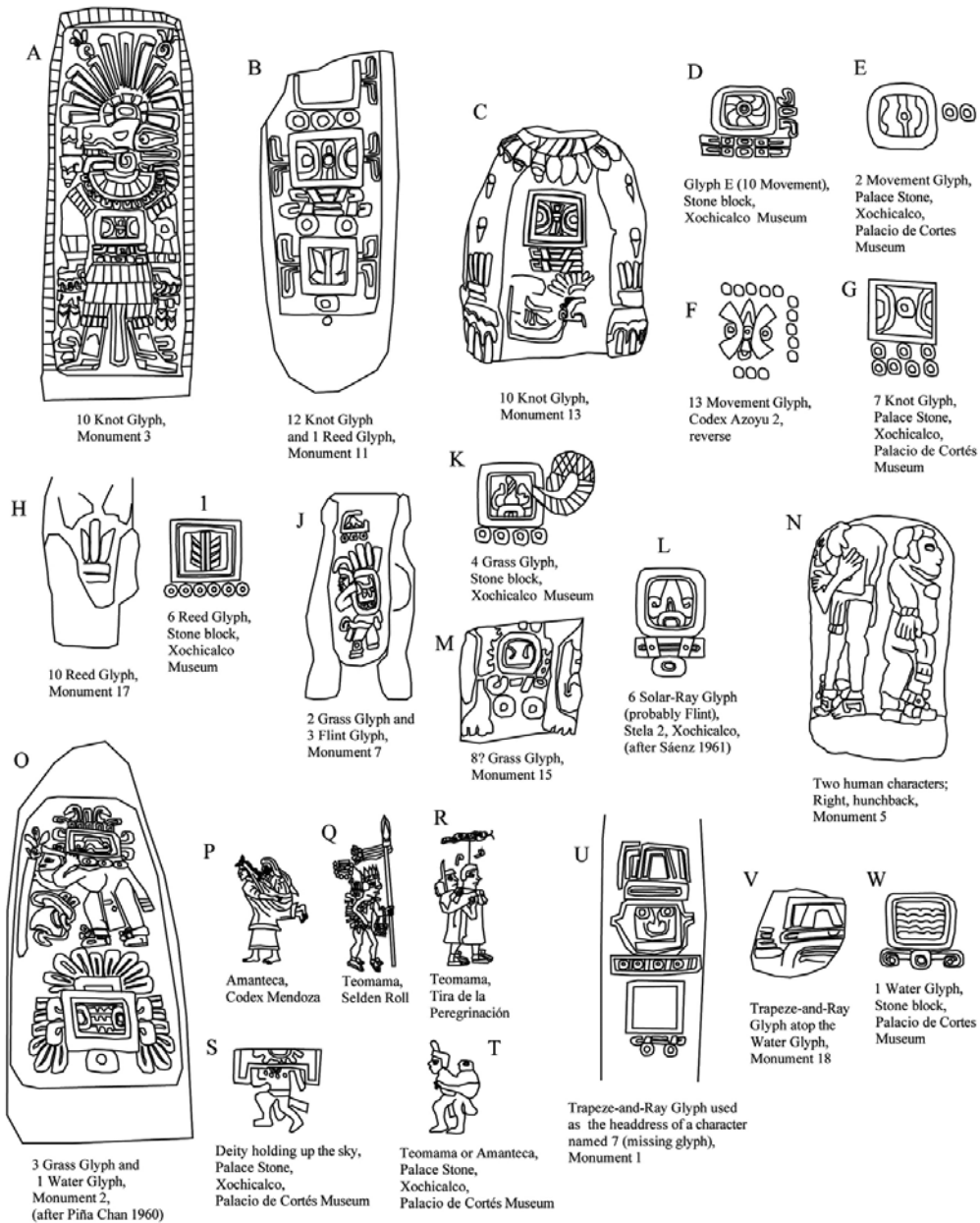
Figure 8. Carved stones from Classic and Epiclassic periods at Piedra Labrada, Eastern Guerrero, unless otherwise specified.

of the day glyph, 'Dog,' of the Postclassic Mixtec and Aztec calendars.[11] The Knot glyph clearly appears on three different monuments: Monument 3 (Figure 8A),[12] Monument 11 (Figure 8B),[13] and Monument 13 (Figure 8C).[14] In two examples, the Knot glyph is accompanied by the number 10 (Monument 3 and Monument 13), two bars representing five units each. In another case, the glyph appears with the number 12 (Monument 11).

Another glyph seen at Piedra Labrada is 'Reed.' This glyph is morphologically comparable to the Reed glyph at Xochicalco – a feathered base of an arrow (Figure 8I). Urcid reports the Reed glyph on Monument 11 (Figure 8B) and associated with the number 1 (Urcid 2005: figure 1.8). In August of 2005, I recorded a second Reed glyph, this one on the chest of Monument 17 (Figure 8H), a small zoomorphic tenoned head (clavo arquitectonico), perhaps a feline torso; in this example, the calendrical day may read '10 Reed.'

Urcid also reported the calendrical dates '2 Grass' and '3 Flint' on Monument 7, a ballcourt ring at Piedra Labrada (Urcid 2002). This ring is notable for the carving of a human bent backwards following the curve of the ballcourt ring (Figure 9R). The two previously mentioned glyphs are depicted on his maxtlatl (loincloth). A carved detail on the maxtlatl shows a small human porter in profile carrying the Grass glyph on his back (Figure 8J). This glyph at Piedra Labrada resembles the Zapotec glyph N as depicted during the Lioba phase (800-1250 AD) (see Urcid 2005: figure 1.21). This glyph corresponds to the 12th position of the Mesoamerican calendar (the year bearer Grass in system type II, also found in Xochicalco, (Figure 8K). This identification was proposed by Urcid (2002), who drew the monument before it was covered over in lichens and mold; the loincloth detail is now almost impossible to see, especially during the rainy season. The presumed day name, '3 Flint,' is still visible and resembles the so-called Solar-Ray glyph of Xochicalco's Stela II (Figure 8L, Sáenz 1961:52). Another probable

[11] I agree with Urcid's identification, however, I believe that Urcid's Knot glyph for Coastal Guerrero is the most variant when compared to examples from the core area where the Zapotec writing System evolved. The morphology of the 'Knot' glyph at Piedra Labrada also resembles the Postclassic Ollin glyph (Movement), as represented in the local Tlapanec codices of Azoyú 2 (reverse) and the Humboldt Fragment 1 (Figure 8F). On the Palace Stone of Xochicalco (Berlo 1989: 39), the Knot glyph appears together with the year bearer Ollin (Figures 8E and 8G), which favors Urcid's idea that the Knot glyph is a different glyph from Ollin. Nonetheless, Xochicalco's script often uses variants of a glyph on their monuments; such is the case for the representation of the day sign Ollin, by using the Zapotec glyph E (Figure 8D) on a stone recently found on the Acropolis (Museo de Xochicalco).

[12] According to Urcid's database (pers. comm., October 14, 2005), this represents a standing character wearing a feline costume. Urcid interprets this figure as a 'Ruler named 10 Knot as a Jaguar Sacrificer' (2005, figure 2.9). This stela was originally published by Piña Chan (1960: photo 10).

[13] According to Urcid's database (Urcid 2005: figure 1.8).

[14] According to Urcid's database. It depicts a feline with a shell necklace and body decorated with elements resembling raindrops similar to those seen in Postclassic codices. This sculpture was first published by Piña Chan (1960: photo 10).

Grass Glyph is found on Monument 15 (Figure 8M),[15] depicting the number 8, three dots and one bar. The numbers are eroded and it is difficult to ascertain if the dots are actual numbers or just the representation of a bead collar around the feline's neck.

The human porter carrying a calendrical glyph on Monument 7 is not an isolated case at Piedra Labrada. Monument 2 also depicts a porter carrying a cartouche with a glyph on his back and holding a walking stick in one hand (Figure 8O). This monument, a stela over four meters in length, has fractured in at least three pieces, and its surface is so eroded it requires special lights to see any carving. Piña Chan (1960) photographed it 45 years ago and there are more details visible in his photo. From this, and his own renderings, Urcid has identified a special version of the glyph, '3 Grass,' in the cartouche.[16] It is not clear what the significance of these 'glyph porters' is.

Searching the graphic corpus of Mesoamerica, one finds three possible iconographic parallels for such human porters:

1. the Postclassic period teomama[17] who had the duty and honor to carry the primary god of the political unit (altepetl), as seen in the Mexica Tira de la Peregrinación (Figure 8R), the Chocho-Mixtec Selden Roll (Figure 8Q), and perhaps on the Palace Stone of Xochicalco (Figure 8T);
2. the Mexica *amanteca*, or person who carries the bride on her back to the groom's house during the wedding ceremony, as depicted in the Codex Mendoza (Figure 8P); and
3. the graphic representation of the Postclassic myth in which Quetzalcoatl and Tezcatlipoca split the body of the primeval crocodile in two creating the earth and sky, which then had to be borne by both cultural heroes (López Austin 1994), as is observed in the Vienna and Borgia codices and on the Palace Stone of Xochicalco (Figure 8S).

Given the current level of knowledge, I think the first and second options are the best guesses. Thus, the human porters of Monuments 2 and 7 may be an Eastern Guerrero variant of the Nahua *teomama* or *amanteca*, who are carrying divine objects or important people on their backs; in these two instances, the glyphs may be calendrical names of certain deities or rulers.[18]

Monument 2 also contains another rectangular and ornamented cartouche, portraying a glyph accompanied by the coefficient 1 (Figure 8O). The glyph itself is composed of

[15] According to Urcid's database. It is a slab placed on the wall of the town's church and depicts the claws and breast of a feline.

[16] Based on Urcid's catalog: PLA-2 (pers. comm. October 18, 2005).

[17] *Teomama* is the Nahuatl term for the priest charged with carrying the tribal god during migrations or pilgrimages (Siméon 1997:487).

[18] Javier Urcid believes it may be the name of the porter (pers. comm., October 18, 2005).

three thick parallel lines, and from each, triangular shapes hang down. The lines are defined on two sides by semicircular motifs. Morphologically this glyph resembles some variants of glyph Z in the Zapotec calendar, equivalent to the Postclassic glyph, 'Water' (see Urcid 2001:227). It also resembles the Water glyph in the Lápida of Teotenango (see Caso 1958-1959: figure 19) and the Water glyph on the stone depicting '8 Movement' in the Palacio de Cortés (Figure 8W). Thus, the calendrical day sign on Monument 2 could be '1 Water.'

The Trapeze-and-Ray glyph, which usually represents the year glyph in Postclassic Mixtec codices or a marker of rulership in the Pyramid of the Plumed Serpent at Xochicalco, is present on Monument 1 (Urcid's catalog PLA-1; Piña Chan 1960, photo 12) and Monument 18 (Gutiérrez and Pye 2005, Figure 8V; now in Urcid's catalog as PLA-18). In both cases, the Trapeze-and-Ray glyph is used with glyphs that are not year bearers: on Monument 1 in the headdress of a character named 7?, and on Monument 18 accompanying the Water glyph (Urcid, pers. comm. 2005). It is remarkable that the glyph cartouches of Piedra Labrada were adorned with elaborate feather-like elements, just like Xochicalco glyphs, in contrast to the more sober cartouches typical of the monuments of the Zapotec hinterland.

Texmelincan also has a number of graphic representations in stone. The site was first described by García Payón (1941) after his 1937 exploration and occupies the whole eastern side of the Tezquilcatemic Mountain, approximately 57 ha in extent. In the Ixcuintomahuacan sector of the site, García Payón located the remains of four bas-relief carved slabs (see García Payón 1941: Stones 1 through 4), which depict humans and calendrical glyphs. García Payón also uncovered an in situ fragment of the *tlachtemalacatl* or ring marker of the ball court, which was in the shape of a serpent head. At least two such serpent head ring markers have been removed and taken to the Chilpancingo Museum (Figure 9G).

On Stone 1 from Texmelincan, García Payón (1941: 354) reported a calendrical glyph that was difficult to interpret; he proposed that this glyph was accompanied by the number 7 (formed by a bar and two dots). Unfortunately, this glyph remains an enigma. It has not been documented in the Zapotec, Teotihuacan, Ñuiñe, Xochicalco, Cacaxtla, Tula, Mixtec, or Aztec scripts. Eastern Guerrero is the only place where it has been reported. The glyph is composed of multiple segments of folded bands; three of them form a cartouche that frames its interior (Figure 9A). The main elements are composed by what seems to be the eye and beak of a bird, on top of which there is a folded band forming a C-shape. The entire cartouche is framed, on both sides, by smoking volutes; the top is crowned by a zigzag adornment. Such zigzag elements resemble the adornment on the Reptile Eye glyph of Cacaxtla, Building A murals (see Berlo 1989: 24). The closest example to this glyph is the Vulture day sign on the Palace Stone of Xochicalco (Figure 9B). While García Payon believed the number 7 accompanied the glyph, it is also possible that the two dots under the smoking volutes are only 'bead' adornments of the smoking volutes. If such were the case, then the date would be read as 5 Vulture. The
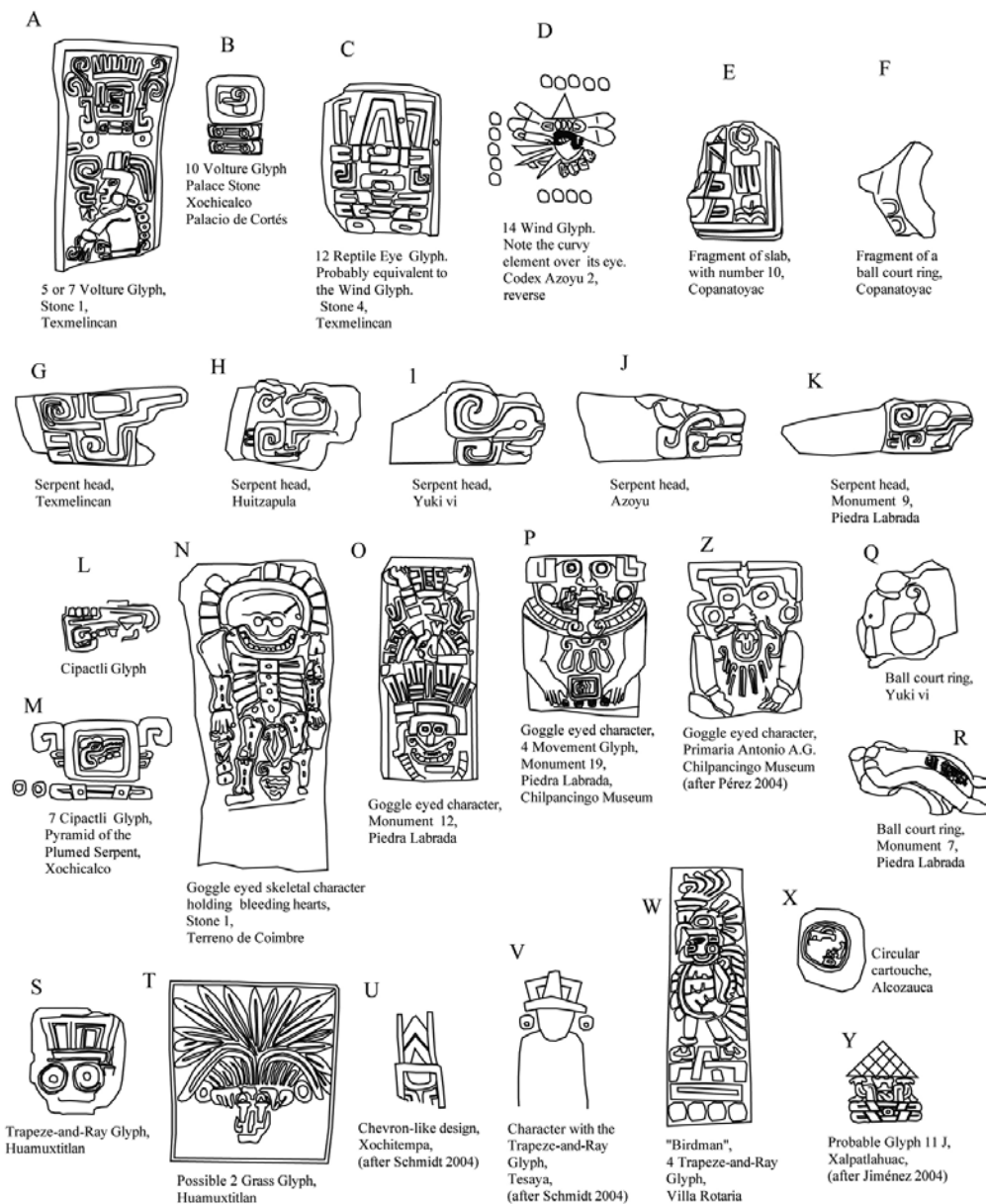
A

5 or 7 Volture Glyph,
Stone 1,
Texmelincan

B

10 Volture Glyph
Palace Stone
Xochicalco
Palacio de Cortés

C

12 Reptile Eye Glyph.
Probably equivalent to
the Wind Glyph.
Stone 4,
Texmelincan

D

14 Wind Glyph.
Note the curvy
element over its eye.
Codex Azoyu 2,
reverse

E

Fragment of slab,
with number 10,
Copanatoyac

F

Fragment of a
ball court ring,
Copanatoyac

G

Serpent head,
Texmelincan

H

Serpent head,
Huitzapula

I

Serpent head,
Yuki vi

J

Serpent head,
Azoyu

K

Serpent head,
Monument 9,
Piedra Labrada

L

Cipactli Glyph

M

7 Cipactli Glyph,
Pyramid of the
Plumed Serpent,
Xochicalco

N

Goggle eyed skeletal character
holding bleeding hearts,
Stone 1,
Terreno de Coimbre

O

Goggle eyed character,
Monument 12,
Piedra Labrada

P

Goggle eyed character,
4 Movement Glyph,
Monument 19,
Piedra Labrada,
Chilpancingo Museum

Z

Goggle eyed character,
Primaria Antonio A.G.
Chilpancingo Museum
(after Pérez 2004)

Q

Ball court ring,
Yuki vi

R

Ball court ring,
Monument 7,
Piedra Labrada

S

Trapeze-and-Ray Glyph,
Huamuxtitlan

T

Possible 2 Grass Glyph,
Huamuxtitlan

U

Chevron-like design,
Xochitempa,
(after Schmidt 2004)

V

Character with the
Trapeze-and-Ray
Glyph,
Tesaya,
(after Schmidt 2004)

W

"Birdman",
4 Trapeze-and-Ray
Glyph,
Villa Rotaria

X

Circular
cartouche,
Alcozauca

Y

Probable Glyph 11 J,
Xalpatlahuac,
(after Jiménez 2004)

Figure 9. Carved stones from Classic and Epiclassic periods at various sites from Eastern Guerrero.

Gerardo Gutiérrez Mendoza

human character depicted on the slab has a simple headdress formed by two long feathers. His arm holds something that has been interpreted as a bag of copal, but it may also be a bouquet of feathers or even a torch with flames. From the figure's mouth emerges a volute representing a speech scroll, which is modified by a floral element, perhaps referencing the fact that the human character speaks a sort of *pillatolli*, the language of the nobility (Siméon 1997). Iconographic elements attached to speech scrolls are a common element at Xochicalco, where the goggle eye characters on the Pyramid of the Plumed Serpent display speech scrolls qualified by different elements.

Stone 4 of Texmelincan depicts a year glyph, together with a 'Reptile Eye' glyph and the number 12, as represented by two bars of five units and two dots (Figure 9C). Caso (1958-1959: 57) originally interpreted the Reptile Eye glyph as the representation of the year bearer, Wind (System Type II, used during the Postclassic period in this region). However, Von Winning (1961:37) reinterpreted this glyph as the earth monster, *Cipactli*. Von Winning's proposal is understandable when one compares the glyph to Teotihuacan examples,[19] or the Cipactli sculptures on the four square columns of Building B at Tula (De la Fuente et al. 1988: photos 60-72). Nonetheless, if Von Winning is correct, then the Texmelincan monuments should have used the year bearers, Crocodile, Death, Monkey and Vulture glyphs, of system type I. Such is not the case. Hence, Von Winning's proposal does not explain the inconsistent use of the Reptile Eye glyph with the year glyph and the number 12. Interestingly, the Tlapanec Azoyú codices depict some representations of the year bearer glyph, Wind (Ehecatl), in its zoomorphic manifestation, with the same curvy element atop the round eye (Figure 9D). The representation of Ehecatl and its related deity Quetzalcoatl with the 'reptile eye' curvy element over their eyes is not restricted to the Azoyú codices but can also be seen in the representation of Ehecatl in Codex Borgia (page 51), the Mexica *Piedra del Sol*, and even earlier in the Classic period on the feathered serpents adorning the Temple of Quetzalcoatl at Teotihuacan. In consequence, I believe that the 'Reptile Eye' glyph under a trapeze-and-ray glyph, as represented on Eastern Guerrero sculptures, may represent the year bearer, Wind, of system type II.

From the various sculptures, one can deduce that the Texmelincan slabs were carved during the Late Classic to Epiclassic periods (600-1100 AD). They appear similar in style to sculptures at Xochicalco (Noguera 1961; Sáenz 1961) and not to the Ñuiñe area (Moser 1977), indicating a stronger relationship with the Valley of Morelos than with western Oaxaca. Similar sculptures and slabs have also been found around Texmelican, including two serpent heads located at the site of Cerro de Molcajete, near Huitzapula (Figure 9H), and a slab fragment found near Copanatoyac, which has a partial inscription for which only the number 10 is recognizable (Figure 9E). It is possible that the latter fragment comes from Texmelican itself, together with the fragment of a ball court ring that I reported from the Presidencia Municipal of Copanatoyac (Figure 9F).

[19] At Teotihuacan, the glyph never appears with numbers.

Azoyú-Tenconahualle is yet another site with graphic representations. Covering some 43 hectares, the site is located on the low, hilly Pacific coastal plain, near a tributary of the Quetzala River. Ceramics and sculptures have been recovered from the site, including dozens of miniature pots with lids that are in single private collection. Also found were vases with modeled human faces, typically depicting emotions: some cry, others smile, show regret, or anger. I have recorded the same pots at Piedra Labrada, and they have also been reported at the site of Huamuxtitlan (Martinez Donjuán 2004:34). There is a large serpent head sculpture that had formerly been located in the ball court (Figure 9J). Serpent head sculptures have also been found in the ball courts at Cochoapa-Yu kivi, Huitzapula, Texmelincan, and Piedra Labrada, a feature that seems to be a typical pattern in the graphicacy system of Eastern Guerrero.

Close to the town of Puerto Marquelia, in the'Los Callejones' area, there is a small site called 'Terreno de Coimbre.' A stela depicting a skeletal figure has recently been found there (Figure 9N). This stela is remarkable because it depicts a glyph on its side, which is similar to the Cipactli representation on the second level of the Pyramid of the Plumed Serpent at Xochicalco (Figure 9M); regrettably, the glyph is damaged and the identification is uncertain. The skull of the individual is depicted with goggle eyes, just like Tlaloc representations seen throughout Central Mexico. This figure seems to be holding shapes that look like the representation of bleeding hearts in the Codex Borgia, a theme also depicted on Monument 3 at Piedra Labra (Figure 8A). In the genitalia area, a rhomboid shape projects its sharp pointed end towards another element that looks like the hearts the skeletal character holds in his hand, albeit larger. I have not seen this strange composite shape reported anywhere else in Mesoamerican iconography. The rhomboid shape may represent a flayed penis from which blood drips and a heart hangs; however, a more careful analysis needs to be done.

I know of at least three other representations of goggle eyes in Eastern Guerrero: Monument 12 at Piedra Labrada (Figure 9O), and two Tlaloc stones in the Chilpancingo Museum (Figures 9P and 9Z). Monument 12 depicts a character with goggle eyes and an elaborate headdress, atop of which is a descending bird, probably an eagle. The first Tlaloc stone (Figure 9P) was brought from Piedra Labrada,[20] is now labeled Monument 19. It shows a figure with a bifid tongue, a trilobe on its chest, and the date '4 Movement' in Xochicalco style on the base of the sculpture. The second Tlaloc stone is very similar to the Tlaloc of Piedra Labrada. It was found at the Antonio A. Guerrero Elementary School in Chilpancingo (Pérez 2004). It consists of a goggle eye character with an elaborate trilobe on the chest, but no calendrical glyph. Unfortunately, the stone is damaged and it is too difficult to ascertain if it had a bifid tongue.

Cochoapa-Yu kivi is located at the bottom of a ravine along the upper basin of the Igualita River (a tributary of the Tlapanec River). This site covers 1.75 ha, although this represents only its ceremonial core, which is enclosed on two sides by torrential rivers

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[20] Rubén Manzanilla, pers. comm., November, 2005.

with the only possible access through a very steep mountain ridge. Remarkably, the ball court at this site still has two rings in situ, which are similar to those at the Piedra Labrada ball court (Figure 9Q). That is, a man who is bent backwards following the outer curve of the ring; here, the hands are tied behind him to the ring of the ball court. In the same ball court, a serpent head sculpture was also found (Figure 9I) and looks just like those found at Huitzapula, Texmelincan, and Piedra Labrada. The sculptures of Yu kivi indicate that the site was likely coeval to Piedra Labrada, dating to the late Classic-Epiclassic periods.

The site of Huamuxtitlan-Tecoapa is located on the eastern bank of the Tlapaneco River and embraces some 30 hectares (Gutiérrez 2002). Sculptures recovered from the site depict goggle eyes with an elaborate trapeze-and-ray headdress (Figure 9S). Post-classic sculptures of kneeling women are also present. Another slab depicts a possible 2 Grass glyph in the Postclassic codex-like style; this sculpture was taken from a site near Huamuxtitlan and is now in the Presidencia Municipal (Figure 9T).

In the area of Chilapa, Paul Schmidt (2004) has recently reported carved stones with graphic elements at Xochitempa and Tesaya near Chilapa. The Xochitempa stone presents chevron-like geometric designs in the style seen at Texmelincan (Figure 9U), while the monument of Tesaya has an eroded human figure with a headdress composed of the Trapeze-and-Ray glyph (Figure 9V). In this situation the Trapeze-and-Ray glyph is again being used to signal the high social hierarchy of the character and not the year glyph. The same may also be the case for the so-called 'Birdman' of Villa Rotaria in the Costa Grande of Guerrero (Figure 9V, Manzanilla 2002). In the town of Alcozauca, I have reported a stone embedded in one of the walls of the main plaza. The stone is carved with a circular cartouche with no numbers and depicts a probable representation of the Wind God glyph (Figure 9X); unfortunately it is broken, and a helpful worker took the liberty of filling in some of the missing fragments with concrete, which makes this interpretation doubtful. Despite suggestions of the importance of the Ñuiñe style in the area (Jiménez 2000), to date, the only reported carved monument in the this style, in all of Eastern Guerrero, is a glyph on a serpent head in the town of Xalpatlahuac (Figure 9Y). This glyph is interpreted as '11 Movement' by Jiménez (2004: Cuadro 5), however, I disagree and would suggest instead that the symbol resembles Glyph J, Corn field, of the Zapotec script (Urcid 2001: 183), which is equivalent to the position of the day glyph Eagle during the Postclassic.

I would argue that the overall iconographic style of stone monuments from Eastern Guerrero resembles the Epiclassic site of Xochicalco more than Classic Period styles at Monte Albán or the Ñuiñe area, an observation that García Payón (1941) made at the site of Texmelincan in 1937. Eastern Guerrero monuments typically portray the year bearers of system type II, anchored by the Movement, Wind, Deer, and Grass glyphs. This system was also used during Classic period Monte Albán (Urcid 2001, 2005), and in Eastern Guerrero, it endured into the first century of Spanish Colonial rule (Vega Sosa 1991). Eastern Guerrero, especially the Costa Chica, was in contact with sites

along the Oaxaca Coast (Urcid and Joyce 2001) and also the Pacific Coast of Chiapas and Guatemala as well. This is suggested in the placement of large stelae together with round altars at the sites of El Pelillo and Metates, both in the municipality of Juchitan; however, this relationship requires more research.

Postclassic and Colonial Graphicacy

Alexander von Humboldt was the first scholar to publish a codex from Eastern Guerrero in *Vues des Cordillères...* in 1810. This codex, the Humboldt Fragment 1, depicts the tributary obligations of the Tlapa-Tlachinollan *altepetl* to the Mexica calpixque (tributary collector). It is now known that the Humboldt Fragment 1 is a continuation of the reverse side of the Codex Azoyú 2, although there are four missing pages that used to connect the Humboldt to Azoyú 2. In 1940, Yreneo German, the *comisario ejidal* (constable) of the Tlapanec town of Azoyú, gave a few sheets of an ancient painted codex to Francisco Rodriguez, a topographer with the National Agricultural Commission.[21] These sheets found their way to the Library of the National Museum of Anthropology, and eventually Alfonso Caso arranged the acquisition of the remainder of the codex. Three documents were brought from Azoyú, which together were called the Tlapanec codices of Azoyú (Codex Azoyú 1, Azoyú 2, and the Lienzo Genealógico de Tlapa-Azoyú). Salvador Toscano (1943) was the first to publish a preliminary study.

Given that Constanza Vega Sosa (1991) and I (Gutiérrez 2002) have proposed different interpretations of these codices, I will focus instead on their histories and on the sociopolitical contexts in which these documents originated. Were the codices of Azoyú, and generally all the pictorial documents of Eastern Guerrero, created with the goal of recording and narrating the history of the *altepetl* of Tlapa-Tlachinollan in a faithful and objective way? Who ordered the production of these codices? What was their historic and social context? What were the goals for creating them and who benefited from their creation and existence? These are compelling questions for two reasons: 1) the codices' narratives are used to recreate the Postclassic and early Colonial history of Eastern Guerrero, and 2) historiographic methodology requires a critical analysis of primary sources.

To answer these questions requires recreating the historical and social context in which these codices were painted. While the Azoyú materials may be copies of earlier Prehispanic paintings, these three documents were created during the first 50 years of colonial rule. Thus, the historical context in which they were produced would have been

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[21] Based on digital photos of Herminio Torres Avelino's archive. This archive contained the personal papers of Felipe and Urbano German, grandfather and father of Yreneo. This archive also contained the 'Títulos Primordiales' of Azoyú. Unfortunately, Herminio Torres Avelino died early in 2002, and his family threw away almost all the ancient documentation.

one of accelerated cultural change, in which Mesoamerican society was transforming to adapt to the Spaniard's political system. This context is reflected in the narrative of the three codices, particularly in the rapid and unclear succession of rulers to the office of tlatoani. As important documents used to claim rights of succession and other prerogatives given to local Indian caciques in the Colonial system, these codices were subject to what 19th and early 20th century western historiographers consider distortions and fabrications – what some archaeologists in search of 'true' history call 'political propaganda' (Marcus 1992). Indeed, changing narratives can be observed in many codices, not only in overlaying paint layers, but also in conscious acts of mutilation and destruction undertaken by members of the *altepetl* and not always by fanatic Spanish priests, as Mexicans are taught in elementary school. There is clear evidence that the Azoyú codices underwent constant modifications throughout their life as indigenous documents, becoming rich palimpsests through which one can analyze the changing interests of those who had them in their care. Some of the obvious modifications to Azoyú 1 include: at least one missing page at the beginning and at least another page at the end of it; the pasting of paper fragments to repaint and modify original narratives on pages 24 and 35; and the constant repainting and aggregation of new scenes, characters, symbols, and glosses at different times and by different scribes on pages 1, 23, 24, 32, 35, 36, 37, 38, 1I, 2I, 3I, 4I and 5I.

Azoyú 1 and 2 are cognate documents, meaning that they depict roughly the same pictorial narrative, although with important differences (Figure 10). They frequently diverge in the presence/absence of some secondary characters and in the representation of place names. These differences may be the result of slight variations in the symbolic corpus of the different tlacuilos who painted them. Notably, it is the silences and omissions between both narratives that reveal the most remarkable differences. These divergences are more evident in the sections describing Colonial period events. For example, Azoyú 1 consistently depicts a violent social transition from Prehispanic to Colonial rule. Violence is portrayed by vexations and corporal punishment meted out to members of the indigenous nobility (Figures 10A and 10B). In contradiction, Azoyú 2 depicts no such violence and instead presents scenes of political negotiation as mechanisms for change and adaptation – for example, when the first Spanish corregidor arrives, all the regional caciques are depicted gathered around the Tlapa-Tlachinollan ruler to arrange jurisdictional divisions according to European tenets (Figures 10C and 10D).

Returning to the question of who ordered the creation of the Azoyú codices, I hypothesize that the main candidates for financing their manufacture are the last rulers depicted in them, or the people in their inner circles of power. Below I present my current interpretation of their history.

In 1536 Don Tristán de Arellano is appointed the first Spanish corregidor of Tlapa (Ruiz 1991: 356). In the codices, this moment is depicted as a turbulent period, where the basic divisions between *señorios* are established to estimate the tribute and services owed to the encomenderos. Apparently, the first legal trials related to tribute and serv-
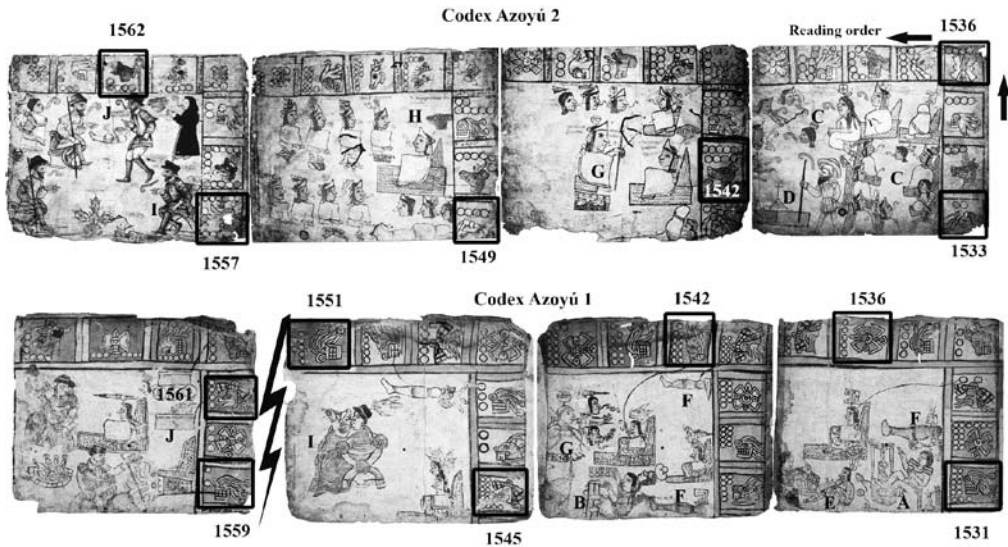
Figure 10. Codices with cognate narratives.

ices took place at this point (Figure 10E). The rulers of Tlapa-Tlachinollan rapidly succeed one after the other due to premature deaths (Figure 10F). This situation seems to stabilize around 1542 when the Tlapa *señorio* is given to Don Domingo Cortés, Quapoltochin Teuhtli (Lord Rabbit), who would remain as such until his death in 1562.

In addition to having to obey the Spanish corregidor appointed by the Viceroy, the Indian cacique Don Domingo Cortés had to cede sovereignty to an Indian judge of repartimento,[22] who has been incorrectly called the 'Jícara de Pulque' and to whom the Viceroy awarded the vara de mando (baton of authority) in 1544 (Figure 10G). The supposed glyphic name, 'Jícara de Pulque,' actually references the position of *tlayacanqui* (the Nahuatl term for *juez de repartimento*). This judge was a member of the Prehispanic indigenous nobility and is represented as the ruler of Atlamaxac-Ixcateopan.

I propose Don Domingo Cortés as the likely candidate to have ordered the creation and financed the production of at least the Codex Azoyú 2, the document in which Don Domingo is presented as a powerful cacique who exercises control over the province (Figure 10H). This suggestion needs corroboration, although what we can affirm is that the death of Don Domingo[23] in 1562 marks the end of the narrative of both Azoyú 1 and 2. It should be clarified, however, that both codices had some final sheets removed, so

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[22] Judge in charge of distributing the Indian labor among Spanish encomenderos.

[23] There is a discrepancy here between Azoyú 1 and 2. Azoyú 1 states that Don Domingo died in the year 4 Wind (1561), while Azoyú 2 states that Don Domingo died on the Feast Day of San Pablo (June 30, depicted by a sword) of the year 5 Deer (1562) (Figure 10J).

we do not know when the narrative had previously ended. Interestingly, Don Domingo Cortés is the first native lord (señor) who was painted wearing Spanish clothing (Figure 10I).

Another point meriting attention is that Don Domingo did not appear as a tecutli in the list of rulers that is presented in the Lienzo Genealógico de Tlapa-Azoyú. This is strange because the lists of rulers generally coincide among the three codices up to the Spanish conquest. In fact, Lord Xiuhtecutli (Fire) is the last ruler of Tlapa who appears in all three documents: Azoyú 1 and 2 and the Lienzo Genealógico.

There is something peculiar about the divergence between the Lienzo and the two Azoyú codices, especially when one realizes that the last sections of the Codex Azoyú 1 were removed precisely where the list of rulers should continue after Lord Xiuhtecutli (Fire). The Codex Azoyú 2 was cut in the same place, thereby creating the Humboldt Fragment 1 (and its missing four pages), and forcing the Codex Azoyú 2 to also end with the death of Don Domingo. These omissions and alterations would suggest that Don Domingo Cortés, or someone associated with him, had ordered the repainting of the final sheets of the Azoyú codices.

Although both Azoyú codices end with the death of Don Domingo Cortés, the Lienzo Genealógico de Tlapa-Azoyú continues its narrative but without chronological referents. Eleven rulers succeeded Lord Xiuhtecutli (Fire). Don Bernardino de Alvarado together with Doña Beatriz de la Cruz, Doña Lucía Francisca, and Don Diego de Alvarado are the last Indian nobles painted in the Lienzo Genealógico. Even though the Azoyú codices seem to have been painted in Tlapa, at some point all three documents were moved to Azoyú, located in the Costa Chica region of Guerrero (80 km south of Tlapa), where they remained until 1940.

How is it possible that documents with contradictory information were found together in the possession of one branch of the ruling lineage (*tlatomecayotl*)? Who was this Alvarado family and were they perhaps the ones who had ordered the repainting of the codices to suit their needs? Apparently, the Alvarado family was a powerful lineage that controlled various cacicazgos in the La Montaña region of Guerrero, including that of Atlamaxac-Alcozauca and Calihuala. They were said to be direct descendants from the rulers of Tlapa-Tlachinollan, through a matrimonial alliance that united the ancient and powerful Tlahuiscalera (Dawn) lineage, which governed the kingdom of Teocuitlapan (associated with the Epiclassic site of Texmelincan), with the rulers of the Tlapa-Tlachinollan kingdom (Gutiérrez 2002, chapter 4). This alliance had given the Alvarados the rights to succession over a series of towns that together comprised more than 4,000 sq km and thousands of tributary households. In the 18th century, we find that this lineage was divided into various branches that fought amongst themselves and in the courts over the rights of succession.

During the 17th century there was an explosion in the production of pictorial documents claiming territorial rights, especially *Lienzos* (cartographic documents on cloth) depicting land boundaries. Over 25 have survived to date in various native communities

in Eastern Guerrero (Jiménez and Villella 1998). But gradually, during the late 17th and 18th centuries, they went from being primary litigation documents to secondary appendages to voluminous file folders of judicial cases. A turning point in the perceived value of pictorial writing as the primary code and channel of communication can be detected in early 18th century during the legal fight for the Alcozauca cacicazgo between the heirs of Pedro de Alvarado and Juan Maldonado Morales y Alvarado. The latter obtained an order from the Viceroyal Audiencia mandating that the Alcalde Mayor of Tlapa seize documents from the Alcozauca cacicazgo. This order was diligently executed on September 1726, and twelve codices painted in Prehispanic and early Colonial style were confiscated and presented to the lawyer of Juan Maldonado Morales y Alvarado to be used in his case. After the lawyer studied the codices, he immediately complained to the Audiencia, accusing the widow and the executor of the will of Pedro de Alvarado of having hidden the Spanish Title of the Cacicazgo holding and map; instead, they had given the Alcalde Mayor only 'useless clothes' (AGN, Tierras 445, exp 4). I suspect that in some similar lawsuit someone could have altered the two Azoyú codices. It is likely that during a judicial proceeding, a fragment of the Codex Azoyú 2 was moved to Mexico City and there some intermediary sold it to Lorenzo Boturini in 1737. The Viceroyal authorities perhaps seized the document during the Boturini trial, and from there it could have been stolen from the Viceroyal's archive, and later sold or given by Fray Pichardo to the Barón von Humboldt in 1803, who then took it to Europe.

In summary, in order to make adequate use of pictorial documents we have to reconstruct the play of local and regional political interests, as well as the personal aspirations of the historical agents who manufactured or modified these documents.

Independence and Modern Day Graphicacy: The Convoluted Relationship Between the Rebel General Vicente Guerrero, the Atlamajalcingo del Monte Church's Bells, the PRI Senate Candidate, and President Carlos Salinas de Gortari

Although the Spanish Colonial system in Central Mexico gradually reduced the prerogatives of the Indian caciques until their virtual disappearance, in the case of Eastern Guerrero, they endured within a strong political and economic class up to the Mexican Independence. Thus, these descendents of caciques were, together with the Indian communities, the primary patrons for the production of written documents during Colonial times. These documents dealt mainly with land litigations and the struggle of indigenous communities to escape personal service or tributary obligation to these cacique families (Dehouve 1995). The cacique system of Eastern Guerrero suffered a mortal blow during the War for Independence when many of their members were executed in Tlapa in 1814 by the Viceroyal army, accused of having helped the insurgents who fought for Mexican Independence (AGN, Operaciones de Guerra, soporte #73, exp. 29).

Between 1814 and 1817, Eastern Guerrero was the scene of major military operations by the Viceroyal army to destroy armed groups commanded by the rebel generals, José

María Morelos, and later, Vicente Guerrero. The rebels established several strongholds along the border between Oaxaca and Guerrero (AGN, Operaciones de Guerra, soporte #75, exp. 64); one was located in Cerro de la Purísima, 2 km southeast of the town of San Bautista Atlamajalcingo del Monte. In 1815 the Mixtec people of Atlamajalcingo gave the rebels 21 *arrobas*[24] of lead, after having melted down their church's organ pipes and two bronze bells. The bells in particular were significant for the people of Atlamajalcingo: one advocated to the Virgén de la Purísima Concepción and the other to San Antonio. After the ousting of Emperor Agustín de Iturbide, the people of Atlamajalcingo tried to obtain restitution of their organ and bells. In 1823 the Alcalde of Atlamajalcingo, Cayetano Ysidro, wrote a receipt[25] narrating how the lead and bronze was given to Don José María Sánchez, an assistant to General Vicente Guerrero, with the promise that the organ and the bells were to be restored once the Independence War was over.[26] In that same year, Vicente Guerrero himself wrote a letter to the first Mexican Congress recognizing the validity of the receipt and the debt owed to the community of Atlamajalcingo by the newly created Mexican nation.

Despite the recognition of the debt, the young Mexican Republic was so broke that the restitution never took place. The people of Atlamajalcingo, however, did not forget the debt or the occasion when Vicente Guerrero fought against the Viceroyal forces in the mountains of Guerrero.[27] The town memory of the event was passed on, generation after generation, through oral tradition. With memories eventually blurring over time, even with the nearby presence of the ruins of the La Purísima mountain stronghold,[28] someone located the old receipt in the municipal archive in the 1960s and memories were refreshed. One day an ambitious PRI Senate candidate happened to visit the town, the young congressman José Francisco Ruíz Massieu. He learned of the Vicente Guerrero story, saw the receipt, and promised to help; by doing so, he secured for himself the political support of the people of the Atlamajacingo municipality. The young congressman kept his word and obtained an audience with then President Luis Echeverría Álvarez (1970-1976). A historical investigation was ordered by Echeverría, which produced positive results for Atlamajacingo. Government historians validated the oral history of the town, authenticated the receipt, and provided them with a copy of Vicente Guerrero's letter to the first republican Congress in 1823.[29] To compensate the debt that the Mexican nation owed to the small Mixtec municipality of Atlamajalcingo del Monte, Luís Echeverría ordered a program

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[24] Spanish unit of weight used for liquids. It ranges from 11.5 to 12.5 kilos, depending on the province.
[25] A single-page document describing the receiving of goods.
[26] Document in the municipal archive of Atlamajalcingo del Monte
[27] There are at least 52 Viceroyal reports of war operations in Eastern Guerrero in the Archivo General de la Nación (AGN), Ramo: Operaciones de Guerra.
[28] In Mixtec La Purísima Mountain has been renamed as Xiniucu Nooxino Vicente Guerrero, meaning: 'The Mountain where Vicente Guerrero was…'
[29] The town did not have a copy of the V. Guerrero letter; it was discovered during the historical investigation by the historians.

of social and economic assistance that included: a CONASUPO[30] store, a regional bank office of BANRURAL,[31] and financial support to construct a new municipal building. The people of Atlamajalcingo recognized that these improvements in their overall condition of extreme poverty and marginality were due to the old receipt. Over time the receipt and the copy of Guerrero's letter were glorified and used to achieve further political goals and increase the prestige of the municipality among their competing neighbors. José Francisco Ruiz Massieu's political career took off, and he was widely supported by the Mixtecs in achieving the governor's office of the State of Guerrero (1987-1993). The memory of the rebel General Vicente Guerrero, the politician Ruiz Massieu, and the bells of Atlamajalcingo del Monte intertwined still more when, during Ruiz Massieu's term as Governor of the State of Guerrero, the town received funding from PRONASOL[32] to 'petrify,' literally put in stone, the memory of the town's role in the War of Independence and the benefits that it received from that decision fifteen decades later. A large public plaza was constructed in Atlamajalcingo del Monte. A stone and bronze monument was placed there which contained four primary elements: 1) a full-body bronze statue of Vicente Guerrero, dressed in military uniform (Figure 11A); 2) a limestone slab carved in high-relief reproducing the 1823 Vicente Guerrero's letter to the first Mexican Congress (Figure 11B); 3) a logo composed of three parallel bars crossed by three diagonal bars in the center (Figure 11C); 4) a limestone slab carved in high-relief reproducing the receipt written by Cayetano Ysidro, displaying the date 1815, when the lead and bells were given to the rebel army (Figure 11D).

At this point I want to analyze the 'meaning construction' of the graphic elements described above and the sociopolitics involved. First, most Mexicans who see the bronze statue atop the monument know that it depicts Vicente Guerrero (Figure 11A), not because the monument has his name carved on it, but because Mexicans learn to identify his idealized features in elementary school. The identity of Vicente Guerrero is a semasiography addressed only to those who share the same cultural and historical background. Vicente Guerrero's statue in Atlamajalcingo would not be different from hundreds of other idealized statues depicting him all over the State of Guerrero, if it were not for a subtle variation: his head is looking toward the same spot where his right arm is pointing (Figure 11E). That place in the distance signaled by the bronze statue is the summit of the mountain, La Purísima, where the rebel stronghold was located and the lead and bells was given to Don José María Sánchez. This references the memory of the town, because even though the name La Purísima is mentioned on one of the slabs,

only local people know its location and the meaning of the position of the head and right hand of the statue. Furthermore, the statue, as a three-dimensional object, is linked through its pointing finger to La Purísima mountain, which is the location of the only archeological proof of the events that took place in 1815. Thus, both the statue and the mountain become fundamental pieces of the cultural landscape and regional landmarks for navigation and reference. In this way, the modern tlacuilo is using the landscape as a canvas, as the primary channel of communication to send messages to whoever is trained to receive them.

The texts carved on the two limestone slabs are reproductions of older documents placed together on the monument to honor them as precious objects and not to explain the meaning and intention of the monument (Figures 11B' and 11D'). Both documents are written in early 19th century handwriting, which most people today cannot fully read. Now then, let's suppose that an 'Archaeologist-Epigrapher' of the future would attempt a paleography of both texts, trying to figure out what the narrative is describing of the events that took place in 1815 and 1823. Note that he/she would not be able to discern when the monument itself was erected. This hypothetical investigator could only guess that it was erected the same year or after the last date depicted on the slabs (1823). It might seem that the tlacuilo forgot to put the date of the monument's erection, some 150 years after the celebrated events took place. Actually, the 'forgotten' erection date is there on the monument for everyone who knows the meaning of the third element, the logo of the three parallel bars crossed by three diagonal bars (Figure 11C). This element is the logo of PRONASOL, the social development program that directed state funding to poor regions for community-oriented projects. Created by President Carlos Salinas de Gortari in December of 1988, it operated until its gradual dismantling by President Ernesto Zedillo in 1996. So, without any further consultation of the archives of the Mexican government, we know roughly that the monument was erected within those seven years. One of the requirements of any construction project financed by PRONASOL was the obvious and visible placement of the program's logo on the finished product. PRONASOL funding was used as political propaganda to improve the image of PRI[33] and President Carlos Salinas de Gortari. PRONASOL monies were also subject to abuse by PRI local authorities and manipulation for electoral purposes; in particular, the program encouraged community defections from the leftist party, the PRD.[34]

Tragically, José Francisco Ruiz Massieu was murdered in 1994 and his death was deeply lamented in Atlamajalcingo del Monte, especially by the oldest members of the community who had known him as a young Senate candidate. His murder, together

[33] Partido Revolucionario Institucional (PRI) is the hegemonic political party that ruled Mexico for seven decades.
[34] Partido de la Revolución Democrática (PRD) is the Leftist Mexican political party that presumably won the presidential election in 1988, although the PRI was declared the winner despite widespread allegations of fraud.
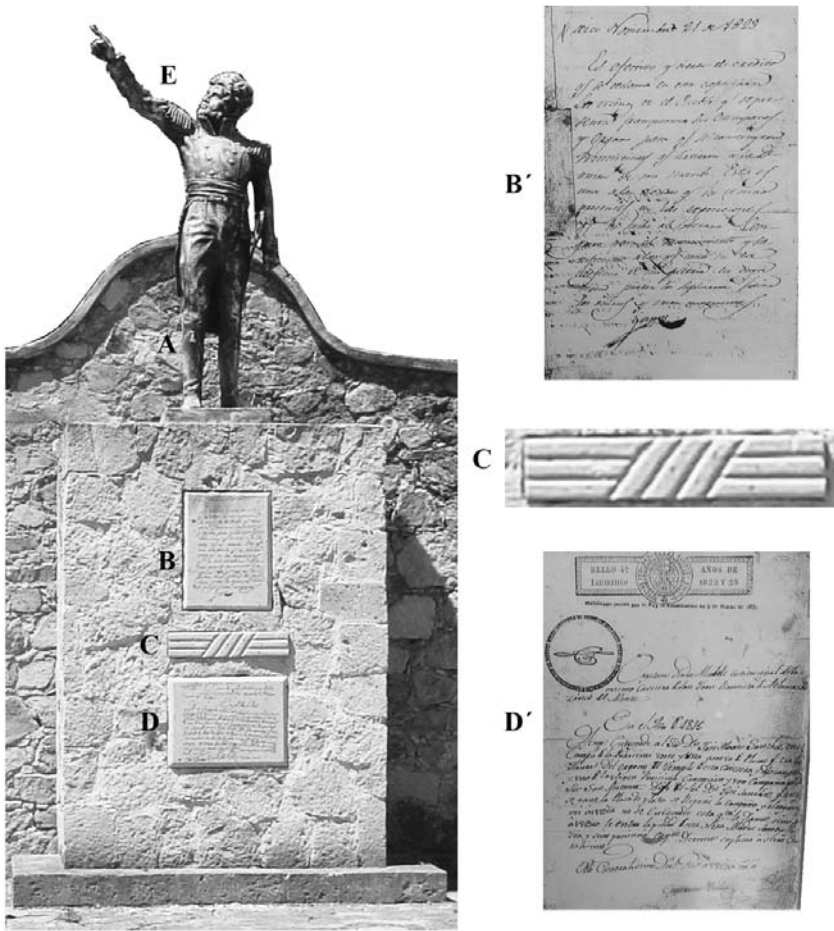
Figure 11. Sculpture of Vicente Guerrero in Atlamajalcingo del Monte, Guerrero.

with the assassination of Luis Donaldo Colosio, the PRI candidate for the Mexican presidency and ironically the political operator of PRONASOL, marked a turning point in the demise of the PRI as the ruling party in Mexican politics. The image of President Salinas was further damaged when his brother, Raul, was linked to the homicide of José Francisco Ruiz Massieu, ex-brother-in-law to the Salinas brothers. Raul was subsequently charged and imprisoned for the Ruiz murder, among other things, and President Salinas exiled himself to Europe.

For those who can 'read' it, the political figure of President Salinas is embedded within a monument commemorating an exchange of goods between the assistant to General Vicente Guerrero and the town of Atlamajalcingo del Monte in 1815. Of course, our

hypothetical archaeologist of the distant future, superficially examining Vicente Guerrero's monument, would not have the means to know all the political drama that linked the present-day municipality, the assassinated former Governor of the State of Guerrero, and the federal authorities of the 19th and 20th centuries to the organ and bells of a small Colonial church of a poor Mixtec community in Eastern Guerrero.

Conclusions

I have tried to provide a brief overview of the evolution of graphicacy in Eastern Guerrero. More than four thousand years separate the oldest petroglyphs recorded in the region to the statue of Vicente Guerrero in Atlamajalcingo del Monte. In between, we have reviewed the use of Formative, Classic-Epiclassic, Postclassic and Colonial codes. As modern receivers of these ancient messages, our capacity to understand their intended meaning varies widely. Our interpretations become more refined the closer the messages are to us in the temporal scale. The corpus of the Postclassic period codes is better understood than those from earlier periods. This provides the opportunity for a deeper analysis of them, which allows us to understand better the game of political interests behind the production of messages. Speculatively, I have interpolated the Postclassic period experience to earlier codes of the area and to obtain some meaning from the Classic-Epiclassic stone monuments that would otherwise be mute, especially as they are only fragments of larger texts that have lost their linguistic, cultural, and spatial contexts. The same applies for the Olmec paintings and the earlier petroglyphs of Eastern Guerrero.

Reviewing the evolution of graphicacy in the area, it is possible to establish a corpus of iconographic elements, specifically: 1) geometric and abstract symbols, 2) floral, 3) faunal, 4) anthropomorphic, 5) cultural objects, 6) hieroglyphs. All these elements were used in different ways through time to create symbols and local codes of communication. It is likely that since the petroglyphs, Eastern Guerrero symbology is a combination of complex semasiographies and glottographies to convey messages to intended recipients for specific purposes – something that becomes more obvious during the Postclassic and early Colonial periods.

While chronology remains problematic in Eastern Guerrero, as does its relationship to broader Mesoamerica, my archaeological research there shows that a local cave painting tradition and petroglyphic art was present and probably dates to the Late Archaic. At the Cauadzidziqui rock shelter, Olmec style paintings were executed directly over such earlier works. The content of the earlier paintings, emphasizing the sun, plants, and geometric motifs further suggests that this is a regional tradition related to similar paintings found at Chalcatzingo, Morelos. This tradition was probably in place long before the Olmec depictions, which could date anytime between 1200 and 700 BC. We do not know much about the pre-Olmec code, but observing the repetition of some symbols at Piedra Pinta-Totomixtlahuaca, the Cauadzidziqui rock shelter, and further north at Chalcatzin-

go, I propose that the beginning of the standardization of symbols and meanings occurs at this early date. In two complex scenes, one from Piedra Pinta-Totomixtlahuaca and the second from Cauadzidziqui, human characters seem to be connected with symbols located above their heads that may represent cosmic bodies, like stars or constellations. Even though we are unsure of the meaning of these symbols, I believe that they contain much of the spiritual belief and the daily motivations for these early people. To date, the only surviving channels used by the earliest tlacuilos are the rock outcrops and shelters. I do not think these were the only channels, but other materials like wood, baskets, and animal skins have long since decayed. On the other hand, the use of rock shelters tell us something about the possible settlement patterns of these people, since the caves may have also been used as temporary camps or gathering places for ritual, perhaps in the same way that modern Tlapanecs continue performing rituals in the area.

The paintings at Cauadzidziqui rock shelter would seemingly indicate an Olmec intrusion into the region. The presence of a Prehispanic trade corridor connecting the Pacific Coast with the central Mexican highlands suggests why this region may have been important during the Mesoamerican Late Archaic and Formative periods, receiving influence from Central Mexico and the Morelos Valley, as well as from the Pacific Coast. Cauadzidziqui is not an isolated example of Middle Formative period mural painting in Eastern Guerrero – the caves of Juxtlahuaca and Oxtotitlan portray similar paintings and themes. However Cauadzidziqui is one case in which Olmec paintings are literally graffiti over previous paintings. Although there are over 130 Pre-Olmec motifs that were probably not painted in a single event, each motif tends to occupy its own space on the cave wall, avoiding the overlapping of elements, as if the original painters were underlying their importance and/or reverence. In contrast, the Olmec paintings disregarded the integrity of the previous motifs. Another difference between the Pre-Olmec paintings in Eastern Guerrero and those overlaying them in the Olmec style, is the emphasis on social hierarchy and status depicted in the latter paintings and the lack of it in the former. For the first time in Eastern Guerrero, we see in the Olmec paintings a conscious effort to represent the human figure but not in a naturalistic way, but instead holding power emblems. What is the meaning of such a message? Why 'overwrite' an existing channel already utilized and conveying previous messages? From my perspective, what we observe here is a statement of power in which a new ideology is being accepted and used by local elites in consolidation of their relationship with outsiders.

The Classic and Epiclassic graphicacy codes are not yet well understood for Eastern Guerrero. This is because the corpus is small, a problem that will not be resolved until an ambitious program of excavation is undertaken in the region with the hope of uncovering more examples. Nevertheless, from what one can observe at Piedra Labrada and Texmelincan, the regional corpus seems to have mixed influences from the Classic Zapotec script and the epigonous script that evolved later in Xochicalco. To date, Xochicalco's epigraphic code dominates the area; this can be inferred by features such as: 1) the special feather-like adornments around the glyphic cartouches of Piedra Labrada and

Texmelincan, which are common at Xochicalco, but not in Monte Alban's hinterland; 2) the style of the Reed glyph at Piedra Labrada, which is also similar in Xochicalco and different from those seen in Zapotec script; 3) the way speech scrolls in the slab 1 of Texmelincan are modified by attached iconographic elements, similar to the way that speech scrolls are depicted on the Pyramid of the Plumed Serpent at Xochicalco; 4) the theme of the *teomama* (human bearers of gods, but also of rulers) present on the Palace Stone of Xochicalco and Monuments 2 and 7 of Piedra Labrada. Eastern Guerrero and Zapotec scripts, however, do share the same year bearer system, type II, while at Xochicalco, system type III seems to be dominant.

Preliminary interpretations of Eastern Guerrero script during the Late Classic and Epiclassic periods are fragmentary. What we can safely state is that we are able to interpret some calendrical glyphs as sometimes being used as personal names, other times as day signs, and occasionally, as year bearers. The *tlacuilo* of these chronological periods had a larger and more standardized code than their antecessors; nonetheless, regional variation seems to have been the rule, with much experimentation in the creation of semasiographies and phonetism. The only surviving channel is stone and some ceramic vessels, but in contrast to the Middle Formative period, these rocks were worked into thin slabs and stelae, three-dimensional texts that fused lapidary with the site's architecture. Political themes seem to have dominated, with the depiction of warrior rulers displaying aggressive postures connected with weaponry and costumes of ferocious animals holding hearts dripping in blood.

The original carved messages would have had a short life, and either the architectural spaces or the stelae were reutilized for later messages. Urcid (2001:5) has noted that many Zapotec monuments with inscriptions have been discovered in non- primary contexts, and typically this has been the case for other sites throughout Mesoamerica. Eastern Guerrero was no different, and with important exceptions, local monuments seem to have lost their spatial context and original association with other accompanying carved stones since Prehispanic times.

It is interesting to note the strong interaction Eastern Guerrero had with Central Mexico since the Archaic and Formative periods, as imagery on Cauadzidziqui rock shelter suggests ties with imagery seen at Chalcatzingo in Morelos. We have more evidence that Teotihuacan had interests in the area (Gutiérrez 2002) and at its demise, between AD 550 and 650, Xochicalco probably became the new trade partner or political power. These are hypotheses to test for future research.

During the Postclassic and early Colonial periods, the primary channel changes from rock to cotton cloth and amate paper. With the exception of minor sculpture, to date I have not been able to record large carved monuments with hieroglyphic writing.[35] Rul-

35 Although perhaps the stelae of Terreno Coimbre, Juchitan (Figure 9N), and the slab of Huamuxtitlan with the glyph 2 Grass (Figure 9T), are Postclassic. Only excavations at these sites will resolve the chronological problems.

ers' genealogical records, their names, and political deeds are the primary messages depicted in Postclassic graphicacy. It seems that Nahuatl is the language in which most place names in local codices can be read, but in a recent interpretation that I, together with Tlapanec speakers, have done of the Codex Azoyú 1, there seems to be some place-names which can be read in the Tlapanec language. Perhaps the most interesting feature of the corpus of local codices is that many of them have been repainted and mutilated to create rich palimpsests with multiple and ever-changing meanings. This corroborates the ancient *tlacuilo* preferences for reutilizing the same channel. Understanding the significant capital expended by Colonial caciques in official paper for judicial cases, we know that the reutilization of the older pictorial canvases had nothing to do with penny-pinching, but everything to do with ideological justification.

During 16th century there was gradual incorporation of European phonetic writing to add explanatory glosses in some codices, especially in personal and place names. Eventually, the pictorial documents became a secondary appendage to extensive documents, handwritten by professional scribes in Nahuatl and Spanish.

I have reviewed here the evolution of Eastern Guerrero communication systems during the past 4000 years. While the communication codes and their 'intended' receivers are distinct, the methods and objectives of the communication system are similar: to satisfy the social aspirations of political agents. Highlighting the fact that the messages expressed on the rocks and in the codices were constantly being modified, these rich palimpsests offer multiple meanings that reflect the changing needs and aspirations of the regional rulers, as well as a little understood aspect of Mesoamerican communication: the sacralization of the channel or media (stone, skin or paper) in which the messages are captured. It seems that any new message will have more authority if it is executed on the same material (channel) where previous messages were expressed. Thus, in the Mesoamerican world, the channel and not necessarily the message is what transcends time. This is the principal lesson imparted by Eastern Guerrero to the study of the Mesoamerican scripts.

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Ángel Iván Rivera Guzmán

Los Inicios de la Escritura en la Mixteca

La región de la Mixteca es bien conocida por ser la sede de una de las tradiciones de escritura de la Mesoamérica prehispánica. Los códices posclásicos y los lienzos de la época colonial temprana son testigos de la riqueza y la tradición escritural que florecieron en el occidente de Oaxaca. No obstante, el repertorio gráfico por el cual se preservaba la memoria de las comunidades y sus gobernantes se puede rastrear desde tiempos más remotos, por medio de fragmentos de una historia que poco a poco va descubriendo la arqueología. Este ensayo pretende mostrar, de manera general, las evidencias sobre el inicio y uso de la escritura en la región de la Mixteca Alta y la Mixteca Baja, donde contamos con un importante corpus de objetos con glifos e iconografía que nos permite entrever su uso por la sociedad mixteca precolonial antes del periodo Posclásico y de cómo se han desarrollado diversos estilos en la representación gráfica a través del tiempo (Figura 1).[1]

La escritura en el Formativo Tardío

Los primeros testimonios sobre la escritura jeroglífica en Mesoamérica se remontan a un periodo en el cual las sociedades estaban transitando a un periodo caracterizado por la urbanización de los centros poblacionales, el crecimiento demográfico, la expansión de las redes de comercio e intercambio y en general del desarrollo de la complejidad

Figura 1. Mapa de la zona noroeste del estado de Oaxaca con la distribución de los poblados y sitios arqueológicos discutidos. La línea punteada marca los límites geográficos aproximados de la Mixteca Baja. Adaptado de Rivera 1999: Mapa 1.

social, así como el nacimiento de estilos y tradiciones locales en el arte.[2] El sitio de San José Mogote, en el Valle de Oaxaca, tiene hasta el momento la evidencia más antigua del uso de la escritura y el calendario en la región de Oaxaca, mismo que se prolongó a lo largo de varios siglos con la fundación de Monte Albán y otras comunidades dentro del valle (Marcus 1983). Al parecer los hacedores del sistema y de los diferentes monumentos donde aparece la escritura jeroglífica, eran hablantes de la lengua zapoteca (Urcid 2001). Este fue un periodo que se caracterizó por la expansión política de Monte

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[2] Actualmente existe el debate de si debe considerarse a la cultura olmeca de la Costa del Golfo como la primera en desarrollar un sistema de comunicación en base a glifos (Rodríguez et. al. 2006). No obstante, la evidencia del uso del calendario aparecerá siglos más tarde, con el advenimiento de los centros urbanos.

Albán en el valle de Oaxaca y en regiones vecinas. ¿Fue la escritura importada desde el valle de Oaxaca y Monte Albán, hacia regiones vecinas, o estas ya contaban con el conocimiento y el desarrollo propio? ¿Qué tipo de representaciones y temas se abordan en la escritura en la Mixteca en esta época? ¿Es posible que los escribanos zapotecas y mixtecos utilizaran los mismos códigos en sus textos? ¿Las temáticas que abordan cambiaron con el tiempo, o fueron comunes a través del tiempo?

Para el Formativo Tardío contamos con la presencia de algunos monumentos grabados descubiertos en sitios arqueológicos que corresponden a la fase Ramos de la Mixteca Alta (400 a.C. – 200 d.C.). Dos de los primeros centros políticos de la Mixteca, Huamelulpan y Yucuita, fueron testigos de la transformación de la sociedad mixteca hacia la vida urbana, con la construcción de de arquitectura monumental, plazas, terrazas habitacionales, el aumento gradual de la densidad poblacional, así como el uso de sistemas de comunicación por medio de glifos y símbolos. Los estudios gloto-cronológicos sugieren que, desde entonces, los habitantes de estos centros poblacionales ya eran hablantes de mixteco (Hopkins 1984; Josserand et al. 1984).

Huamelulpan fue uno de los primeros centros urbanos de la Mixteca Alta. Distribuido en varios cerros y lomas en un pequeño valle de la altiplanicie mixteca, el sitio cuenta con varios grupos de arquitectura monumental con evidencia de monumentos grabados. Destaca la plataforma C, perteneciente al grupo edificado al Poniente de la Iglesia, y que está fechado para la fase Huamelulpan II, aproximadamente entre los años 100 a.C. a 200 d.C. (Gaxiola 1984: 54). En la esquina sureste del edificio se encuentran dos bloques monolíticos que posiblemente fueron extraídos de la cantera ubicada en la cima del Cerro Volado; el traslado de los bloques debió requerir la participación de toda la comunidad antigua. La piedra que sirve de fundamento a la plataforma fue grabada en dos caras, muestra los glifos calendáricos 9 J (9 Mazorca) y 13 O (13 Mono), sobre los cuales se labró una lagartija, del otro lado del bloque se encuentra el glifo 13 Búho (Figura 2).[3] En la piedra superior, aunque muy deteriorado, se pueden distinguir los glifos 2 Venado, 9 Jaguar, 5 Muerte y 6 Agua (Caso 1961; Gaxiola 1984). Mientras que los glifos 9 Mazorca y 13 Mono forman una pareja, y que pueden corresponder a los nombres de los fundadores de un linaje, cuyo emblema puede ser representado por la lagartija, el resto de los glifos se encuentran orientados hacia la esquina, por lo que posiblemente sean los nombres calendáricos de personajes importantes que atestiguan el inicio de la edificación de la plataforma. Con ello el registro quedaría como testimonio de la obra constructiva de la comunidad. La plataforma de Huamelulpan inicia la tradición de labrar, en las esquinas de las edificaciones, glifos calendáricos que posiblemente representen los nombres de personajes y gobernantes. Siglos más tarde, este mismo patrón se repetirá en la arquitectura ñuiñe del Clásico, en sitios de la Mixteca Baja, como Cerro de

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3 La nomenclatura de los glifos está retomada de la clasificación original propuesta por Caso (1928) y luego modificada por Urcid (2001).
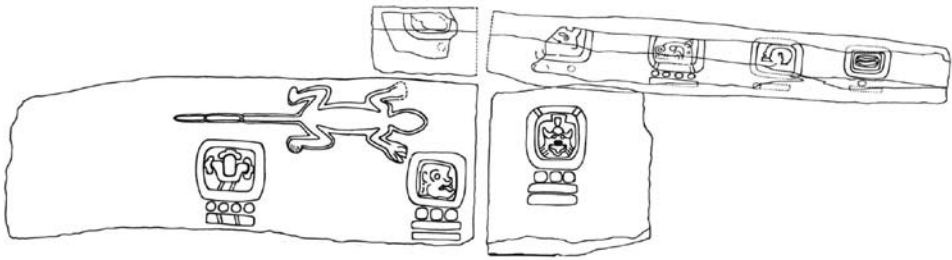
a)

b)

Figura 2. Esquina de la plataforma C de Huamelulpan, Mixteca Alta. Los monolitos muestran una serie de glifos calendáricos que posiblemente hagan alusión a nombres de personajes, posiblemente gobernantes de la comunidad.
a). Retomado de Gaxiola 1984, con modificaciones.
b). Fotografía del esquinero tomada por el Dr. Román Piña Chan, 1978.

la Caja y otros más, como se discutirá adelante. También es sobresaliente la ubicación de los glifos en una estructura monumental, puesto que los motivos quedaban expuestos ante los ojos de la comunidad.
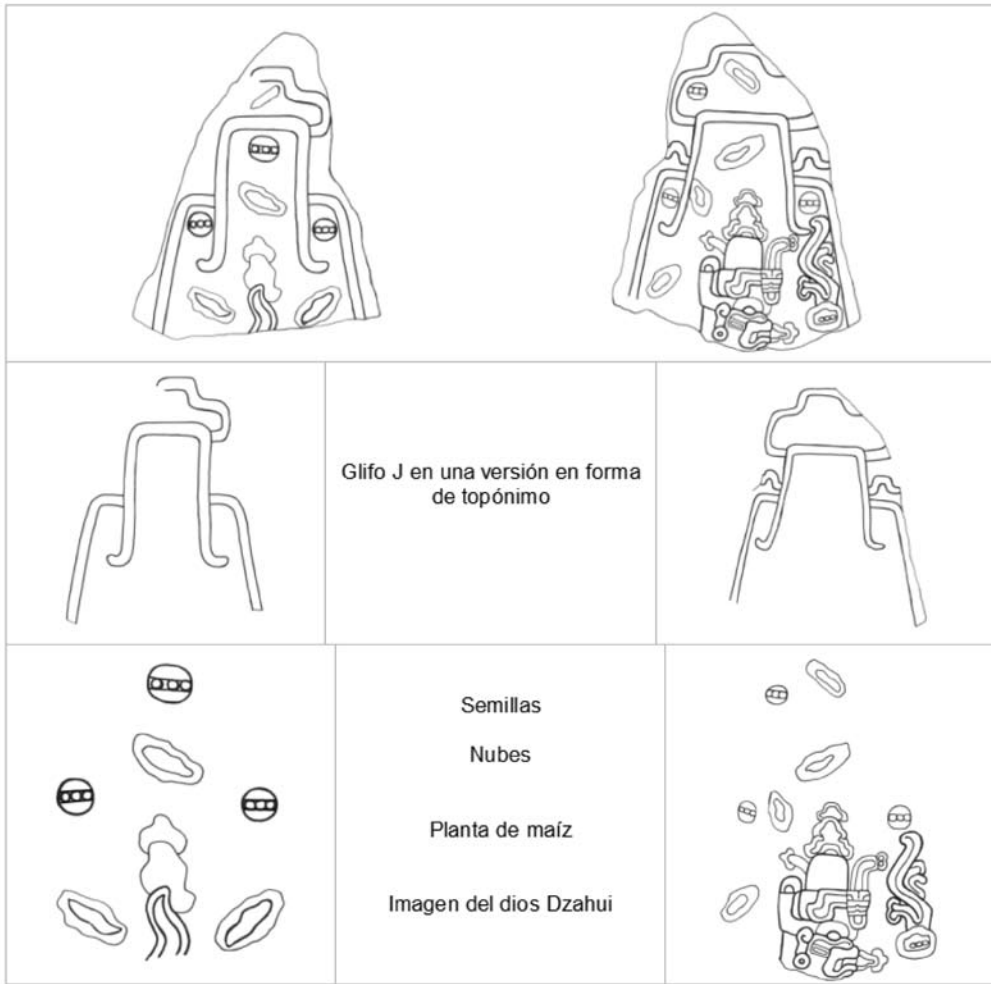
Figura 3. Monumento 1 de Yucuita mostrando los elementos iconográficos en ambos lados de la piedra. Mixteca Alta, Fase Ramos.

El sitio de Yucuita es otra de las grandes poblaciones del Formativo en la Mixteca Alta; ubicado en el Valle de Nochixtlán, ocupando el cerro homónimo, desde su cima hasta las falda cerca del aluvión, llegó a ser un centro urbano durante la Fase Ramos con presencia de arquitectura monumental y algunos monumentos en piedra, que incluyen esculturas y fragmentos de estelas que actualmente se exhiben en el museo comunitario de la población. El más llamativo de los monumentos del sitio es una gran estela, de la cual solo se conserva su parte superior, de forma casi triangular, con la base más ancha que en la punta, realizada en una piedra sedimentaria, quizás extraída del mismo cerro de Yucuita.

La estela, que se encuentra en el centro del pueblo actual, fue localizada a finales del siglo XIX en la falda norte del sitio y publicada por primera vez por Eulalia Guzmán; conocida localmente como el 'corazón del pueblo', se encuentra grabada por dos lados, por lo que era visible ante la comunidad antigua (Guzmán 1934).[4] De grandes dimensiones, la pieza se encuentra incompleta, faltándole la sección inferior que debe de encontrarse aún en alguna parte del sitio. Alfonso Caso ya había notado la ausencia de glifos calendáricos en la estela (Caso 1956: 487). No obstante, la imaginería que presenta es de relevancia para el estudio de la iconografía de la Mixteca Alta en el Formativo Tardío y el tipo de temática usado en los monumentos públicos.

En ambos lados de la estela aparece un gran glifo que combina las formas de una mazorca de maíz, el glifo J, y la figura de un cerro al estilo zapoteco; la combinación de ambos diseños puede deberse a que se hace referencia al nombre del lugar como 'Cerro de la Mazorca' o 'Cerro del Maíz', que quizás sea el topónimo original de Yucuita en el Formativo. En una de las caras se muestra el rostro de perfil de un personaje mirando hacia la derecha, lleva una máscara bucal con colmillos, además de un tocado compuesto por una banda con el glifo C en la frente, un gorro de forma cónica rematado en tres diseños en forma de espiga de maíz; del gorro y del glifo C salen dos elementos en forma de planta, similar al diseño que sale de la boca del personaje. Esta representación es similar al dios Cociyo de los zapotecos y que tiene su contraparte en las urnas de la fase Ramos de Huamelulpan (Gaxiola 1984, Winter 1990). Sería entonces una de las primeras representaciones del dios Dzahui de los mixtecos. Cabe señalar que la efigie del personaje parece continuar hacia abajo, pero la rotura de la estela impide saber con certeza si se le representó de cuerpo completo, como ocurre en algunos monumentos de tradición olmeca tardía encontrados en Morelos, Guerrero y Chiapas.[5] En el otro lado de la piedra hay una forma fitomorfa, posiblemente una planta joven de maíz, que remata en una forma de espiga.

Sobre el personaje aparecen dos conjuntos de glifos, uno de ellos formado por una forma esférica con tres círculos en su interior, esta forma, identificada por Caso y Bernal en los pectorales de varias vasijas efigie zapotecas, ha sido interpretada recientemente como la representación de un grano de maíz abierto (Sellen 2002: 178), mismo que aparece frente a la cara del Dios de la Lluvia y de la cual germina una planta de la misma especie. El otro glifo está formado por un elemento de forma irregular con un marco doble y, al igual que el grano de maíz, aparece distribuido arriba del personaje, por la forma sinuosa e irregular del diseño parece representar una nube.

Marcus Winter ya había notado la semejanza del diseño principal con el glifo del cerro y la presencia del personaje dentro del mismo, quizás en una cueva (Winter 1982:

[4] También hay una referencia sobre la procedencia del monumento en Martínez Gracida 1910, tomo II, que incluye una lámina con un dibujo de la pieza hecho por Sabino Soriano.
5 Compárese por ejemplo con el grabado olmeca de Xoc, Chiapas (Elkholm-Miller 1973) y el monumento 2 de Chalcatzingo, Morelos (Grove y Angulo 1987).
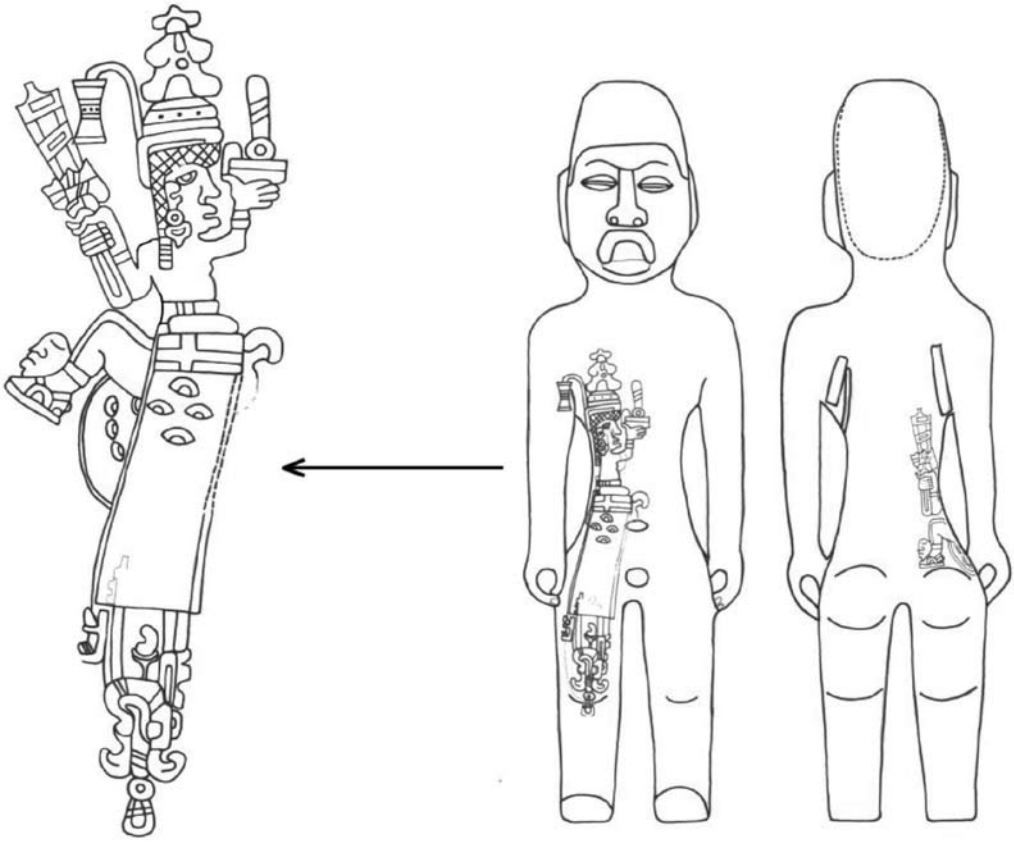
Figura 4. Estatuilla de estilo preclásico con una incisión realizada en estilo ñuiñe temprano. Dibujo basado en una fotografía de Pahl 1977, con modificaciones.

22,1990:82). El hecho de que la deidad de la lluvia se encuentre en el interior del cerro parece remitirse a un concepto generalizado en el pensamiento mesoamericano, en el cual se considera a los montes y cerros como una matriz donde se almacenan dones, semillas, agua y lluvia. Todavía hoy existe esta percepción de la geografía sagrada en varios pueblos de Mesoamérica (Broda et. al. 2001). En la misma región de la Mixteca existen infinidad de cuevas donde se realizan rituales propiciatorios para la lluvia y la cosechas. Es de interés el caso de la Cueva del Agua o Casa del Agua, en San Juan Diquiyú, donde se rinde culto a una escultura prehispánica que representa al Dios de la Lluvia, a la cual se ofrecen las primeras mazorcas de la cosecha de maíz, además de otros presentes (Rivera 2003). Así entonces, la cueva y la escultura muestran un paralelo extraordinario con la imagen de la estela de Yucuita y son testigos de la persistencia y de la resistencia de la tradición religiosa local a través de milenios (Figuras 5a y 5c).
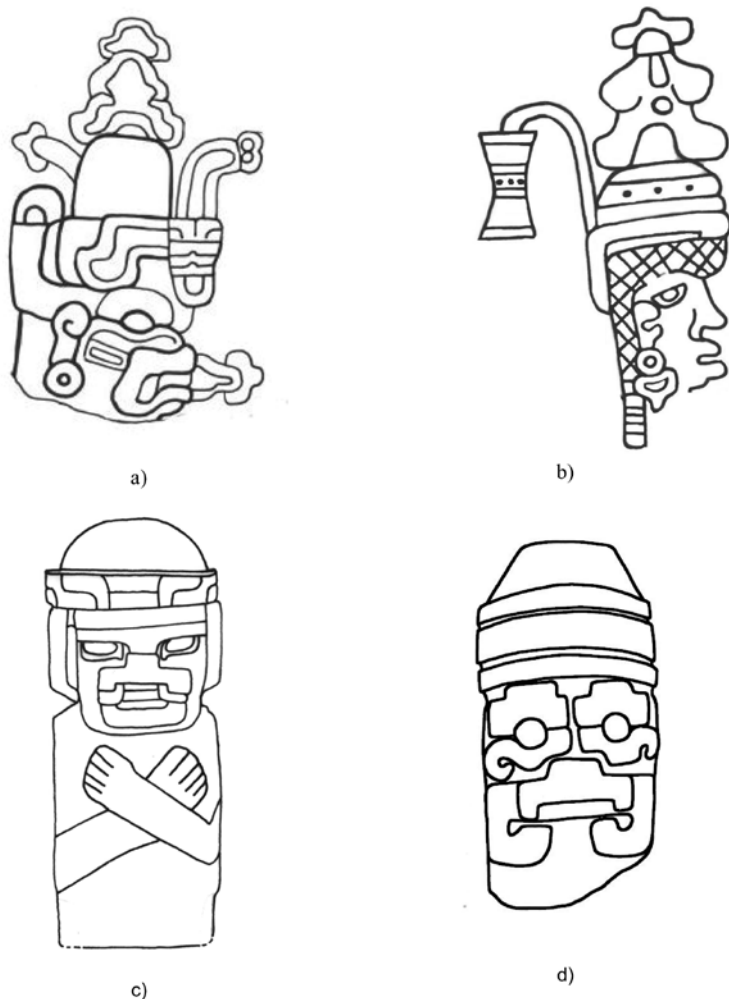
Figura 5. Ejemplos del Dios de la Lluvia en estilo Formativo tardío y Clásico temprano.
a). Monumento 1 de Yucuita.
b). Estatuilla ñuiñe.
c). Escultura de la cueva Vehe Dzahui, Diquiyú. Formativo Tardío.
d). Escultura 1 de Cerro Tecolote, Huajolotitlán. Clásico Temprano.

La temática de la estela es evidencia del culto de la comunidad a la deidad de la lluvia y es interesante notar que en el monumento no se encuentra, al menos en la parte que discutimos, algún glifo calendárico que pudiera identificarlo con algún gobernante. Es posible que la devoción del dios de la lluvia haya sido visto sin la intermediación de los líderes en esa época, de una manera colectiva, en la cual la sociedad habría tenido un vínculo cercano a las divinidades.

Un ejemplo del incipiente desarrollo del estilo ñuiñe y su vínculo con el estilo del periodo Formativo ocurre en una pequeña escultura prehispánica de piedra verde publicada hace años por Gary Pahl (1977) y atribuida erróneamente al estilo olmeca (Figura 4) (Rivera 2005). La pieza se encuentra en una colección particular en los Estados Unidos y, aunque se carecen de datos sobre su procedencia, por las características del objeto y la imaginería de la pieza es muy probable que provenga de alguna parte de la Mixteca Baja de Oaxaca. Al igual que la estela de Yucuita, en el objeto se puede notar la ausencia de glifos calendáricos que denoten el nombre de algún personaje en específico. La incisión en el cuerpo de la figurilla muestra a un personaje masculino con un atuendo formado por un alto tocado o gorro cónico, con orejeras, maxtlatl, faja o cinturón, sandalias y varios ornamentos que presentaremos adelante. La posición del individuo lo muestra de una manera dinámica, que recuerda un poco el estilo de los 'Danzantes' de Monte Albán: con el torso de frente, la cabeza girada a la derecha, la pierna a su izquierda ligeramente flexionada, portando en su sandalia una cabeza humana, mientras que en la pierna derecha se encuentra oculta por un largo diseño rectangular, posiblemente un braguero, con un remate en forma de cabeza de serpiente además de una versión del glifo J (Mazorca) colocado en forma inversa. Con la mano derecha sostiene un largo bastón con amarres y una terminación en forma de muescas. Este artefacto es frecuente en los monumentos ñuiñe de San Pedro y San Pablo Tequixtepec, en la Mixteca Baja, y aparentemente es un arma que sirve para golpear en la cabeza, quizás un hacha con terminación afilada (Figura 15). Es interesante observar que del mismo lado donde se encuentra el objeto, el personaje lleva en su sandalia la cabeza de un hombre muerto. En tanto, la mano izquierda es alzada y sostiene un recipiente con un círculo y una barra vertical con tres líneas transversales; esta misma forma parece ser una parte constitutiva del mismo glifo J en la base de la figura, solo que girada 180 grados.

La cara del personaje y su tocado aportan pistas para tratar de definir su identidad. El rostro se encuentra de perfil, tiene el pelo representado por líneas cruzadas, porta orejeras circulares y con un remate en forma de concha. Su tocado está formado por un gorro con terminación en forma de espiga. Este mismo atributo aparece en esculturas del Preclásico Tardío y Clásico Temprano en la Mixteca; en los ejemplares documentados hasta el momento son insignias de una representación temprana de Dzahui, el Dios de la Lluvia entre los mixtecos.[6] Por detrás de la cabeza le cuelga un diseño semejante a aquél que lleva el personaje pintado en el Puente Colosal de Tepelmeme, en Coixtlahuaca, y que también lleva un gorro semejante al que tratamos (Figura 5 y 7a). Finalmente, en el braguero que le cuelga se encuentran cuatro glifos en forma romboidal, ellos también se encuentran debajo de la pierna derecha. Estas formas son idénticas a aquellas que aparecen, en monumentos grabados de la cercanía de San Pedro y San Pablo Tequixte-

6 Véase también el gorro del 'Idolo de Huamelulpan', que se conserva en el Museo Comunitario de San Martín Huamelulpan (Gaxiola 1984).

pec, donde representan pedernales; frecuentemente aparecen junto con volutas de habla que salen de las fauces de jaguares, así como de los nombre calendáricos de algunos gobernantes, como ocurre en el caso de la piedra 18 de Tequixtepec, donde se muestra al señor 1 Relámpago (Figura 13d). Es importante señalar que los glifos de pedernal representados en esta forma, solo han sido encontrados en monumentos de piedra de la Mixteca Baja, y que todos ellos proceden de las cercanías de Tequixtepec. Esta distribución implicaría que la figurilla proceda de algún lugar cercano a San Pedro y San Pablo Tequixtepec.

Por último, cabe señalar que el rostro del personaje es algo semejante a aquellas representaciones humanas que se conocen en el estilo ñuiñe del periodo Clásico. En este caso el personaje tiene una nariz alargada y puntiaguda, con los labios prominentes y se le puede comparar, por ejemplo, con las pinturas murales de la tumba de Jaltepetongo, donde también se muestran individuos con la nariz terminada en punta y un perfil algo delgado y afilado (ver la contribución de Javier Urcid en este volumen), lo mismo puede decirse de una inscripción tallada en un vaso de alabastro procedente de Añañe, en Yanhuitlán, y de las pinturas murales de la tumba 1 de Ixcaquixtla, en Puebla (Figura 7c).

¿Cuál es el significado de esta imagen? Varios elementos en conjunto hacen referencia al maíz: el gorro, característico del Dios de la Lluvia, la forma de espiga que lo remata, la presencia del glifo J o la mazorca en la base y el grano de maíz que sostiene con una mano. La postura que guarda hace pensar que se trata de un auténtico bailarín o danzante, realizando un acto ritual; este mismo tipo de representación se encuentra en una estela procedente del sitio Cerro del Ídolo, en Puebla, donde un señor llamado 13 Búho, que también porta elementos e indumentaria relacionados con el maíz, realiza una danza. La imaginería del baile y el culto al maíz parecen ser recurrentes en la ideología de varios pueblos de Mesoamérica, en el área maya, por ejemplo, se ha encontrado que en algunas vasijas se muestran escenas del Dios Joven del Maíz, realizando danzas (Taube 1985). Adicionalmente, si se considera que el diseño está hecho en una escultura antropomorfa, de color verde y que en otros pueblos mesoamericanos este tipo de figurillas simbolizaban, por una parte a los ancestros, y por otra, quizás a las entidades que regulaban las lluvias y el crecimiento de la mazorca, sería posible pensar que nuestra estatuilla fuera diseñada con un propósito semejante.

Recapitulando, en los ejemplos discutidos la documentación arqueológica indica la existencia de glifos calendáricos y una rica iconografía en la Mixteca desde el periodo Formativo Tardío. Es probable que el sistema de representación de los glifos haya sido importado desde el Valle de Oaxaca, aunque ello no necesariamente indica la falta de un desarrollo local desde entonces. Hace falta documentar con mayores ejemplos de escritura e iconografía este periodo tan relevante para las sociedades precolombinas de Oaxaca y la Mixteca. Por otro lado, si bien la escritura de esta época muestra glifos calendáricos con posibles nombres onomásticos de los líderes en las comunidades, también hay una fuerte presencia de representaciones de las deidades, especialmente del Dios de la Lluvia.

Marcus Winter ha propuesto el término Ñuu Yata[7] para referirse a la sociedad mixteca del preclásico (Winter 1994: 205). Propongo que el término también sea utilizado para referirse a la iconografía y el estilo que se usó en la Mixteca entre los años 500 a.C. al 250 d.C. cuyos ejemplos se han comentado aquí.

Descubriendo el estilo y la escritura ñuiñe, antecedentes y estudios

El estilo ñuiñe se definió en la década de los años 1960's por medio de la comparación de materiales arqueológicos encontrados en diversos puntos de la región de la Mixteca Baja. Aunque la concepción del término de 'estilo ñuiñe' se debe a John Paddock,[8] años antes de su definición se habían publicado varios materiales ñuiñe por Alfonso Caso e Ignacio Bernal (Figura 6). Caso, en su obra sobre las Estelas Zapotecas, describió una lápida cuya procedencia no se encuentra bien documentada y que se encuentra en el Museo de Oaxaca, pero que por el tipo de numerales y la presencia del glifo Casa, parece corresponder a la escuela de escribanos de la Mixteca Baja, quizás de Cerro de las Minas. También en su estudio pionero sobre el calendario mixteco, Caso describió seis piezas de estilo ñuiñe, procedentes de Cerro de las Minas, Miltepec, Yucuñudahui y de una estela conservada en el Museo Pigorini de Roma, Italia; él llegó a proponer que estos materiales pertenecían a la época Monte Albán III-B y, aunque detecta una fuerte conexión con los sistemas de glifos zapotecas del Valle de Oaxaca, encuentra que no es idéntico pues hay algunos glifos que difieren con los zapotecas, incluido el glifo del año; también llega a preguntarse cuándo ocurrió el cambio de los portadores del año en la Mixteca, pues en las inscripciones del Clásico los glifos no correspondían con los portadores Casa, Caña, Conejo y Pedernal, pertenecientes al sistema del Posclásico (Caso 1956).

También en su monografía y estudio sobre las Urnas de Oaxaca, Caso y Bernal (1952), incluyeron materiales como urnas y esculturas pequeñas que pertenecen al estilo ñuiñe. Entre ellas, un bracero cuya procedencia se atribuye a la región Mixteca (Figura 6d) y que comparte elementos estilísticos con vasijas efigie recuperadas en Cerro de las Minas, Huajuapan y en el sitio de Las Flores, en Tepelmeme de Morelos (Winter 1994).

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[7] Al respecto, el padre Alvarado en su Diccionario menciona que el término para tratar sobre el tiempo pasado es: *ñuu caa sa naha* (Alvarado 1962)

[8] Entre los materiales que ayudaron a definir originalmente el estilo se encuentran: 1).- la cerámica de color anaranjado, semejante al tipo 'anaranjado delgado' frecuente en Teotihuacan; 2).- esculturas de piedra que representan cabezas humanas y llamadas por Paddock 'cabecitas colosales'; 3).- ollitas con borde almenado, cuya distribución se localiza en el Sureste de Puebla y Noroeste de Oaxaca; 4).- un tipo de escritura que combinaba glifos de estilo teotihuacano y zapoteco, además de signos y patrones locales y 5).- urnas de pasta anaranjada de un estilo diferente al zapoteco (Paddock 1966). La lista de materiales diagnósticos del estilo ñuiñe ha cambiado con los nuevos hallazgos, véase por ejemplo, los comentarios de Winter (1991-92, 1994) sobre aquellos descubiertos en Cerro de las Minas y otros sitios cercanos a Huajuapan.
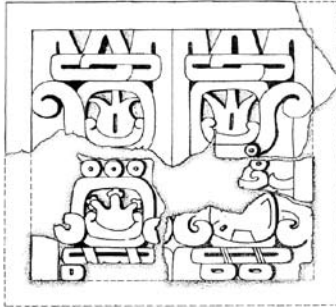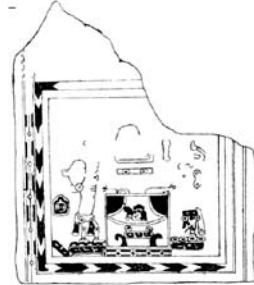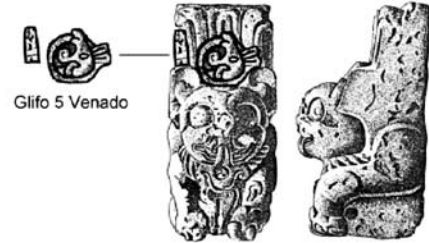
Figura 6. Ejemplos de objetos de estilo ñuiñe documentados por Alfonso Caso e Ignacio Bernal en la primera mitad del siglo XX.
a).-Lápida del Museo de Oaxaca, fotografía retomada de Caso 1928, figura 92.
b).-Lápida 1 de la tumba 1 de Yucuñudahui, Mixteca Alta. Retomado de Caso 1938: figura 68.
c).-Lápida 3 de la tumba 1 de Yucuñudahui, Mixteca Alta. Retomado de Caso 1938: figura 65.
d).-Bracero ñuiñe, retomado de Caso y Bernal 1952. figura 344.
e).-Tigre de basalto procedente de Nochixtlán. Retomado de Caso y Bernal 1952. figura 96 bis.

Después de la definición de los materiales enumerados por Paddock, el estudio de Christopher Moser, fue un gran paso a la sistematización del estudio de la iconografía y la escritura ñuiñe, él pudo compilar en su momento un catálogo de monumentos y urnas procedentes de varias comunidades de la región, además de elaborar un catálogo de glifos, una propuesta de la lista de los 20 días del calendario y de los portadores del año ñuiñe; también emprendió la tarea de comparar la iconografía de algunas vasijas efigies con las imágenes presentes en los monumentos grabados (Moser 1977). Ahora, gracias al trabajo en conjunto de varios estudiosos, entre ellos Laura Rodríguez, Javier Urcid y Carlos Rincón, el registro de monumentos y manifestaciones de estilo ñuiñe ha aumentado considerablemente y con ellos se ha podido establecer algunos patrones escriturales e iconográficos del sistema (Rincón 1995, 2005; Rivera 1999, 2000; Rodríguez 1996; Urcid 2005). Con estos estudios también se ha podido averiguar que los materiales de estilo y escritura ñuiñe no solo se concentran y limitan en la Mixteca Baja, también se les encuentra en el centro de la Mixteca Alta, en el Valle de Nochixtlán, el Valle de Coixtlahuaca y el sureste de Puebla.

Como ya se mencionó, fue Moser quien elaboró una primera propuesta de los glifos que corresponden al calendario de 260 días de la Mixteca Baja (Moser 1977). Él se basó en interpretar los diferentes glifos que había documentado en los monumentos de la región hasta los años 1970's y se apoya fundamentalmente en la identificación de los íconos con el trabajo de Alfonso Caso sobre el calendario usado en Monte Albán y el área zapoteca (Caso 1928, 1947, 1965). En su interpretación, llega a descifrar la secuencia completa de los 20 glifos, además que correlaciona su significado con el calendario mixteco del periodo posclásico, el cual considera, intrínsecamente, como derivado del sistema ñuiñe. Después del trabajo de Moser, Laura Rodríguez propuso otra secuencia de los glifos, cuya estructura está apoyada, en parte, en el desciframiento del calendario zapoteco estudiado por Javier Urcid (Rodríguez 1996, 2000). Finalmente, Javier Urcid ha elaborado varias listas sobre el calendario usado en el periodo Clásico en la Mixteca, en cuya última versión incluye parte del registro gráfico documentado en el Puente Colosal de Tepelmeme, en Coixtlahuaca. (Urcid 1998, 2001, 2005).

Actualmente contamos con un corpus de más de 300 monumentos grabados de estilo ñuiñe, registrados en pueblos de los estados de Guerrero, Puebla y Oaxaca; si a ello le sumamos las inscripciones hechas en objetos portátiles, como esculturas de piedra, cerámica, hueso y concha, además de los testimonios en pintura mural y rupestre, de los elementos decorativos en la arquitectura pública, residencial y funeraria, el corpus llega a un cifra cercana a los 400 ejemplares (Figura 7). Esta variedad de materiales ilustra la versatilidad en la cual fue utilizada la escritura ñuiñe y demuestra la habilidad de los antiguos escribanos para realizar sus obras. Con el acervo de documental existente a la fecha, es posible establecer con seguridad una lista de los glifos calendáricos ñuiñe. En la figura 8 incluyo una propuesta de la secuencia de los glifos, que concuerda en gran medida con la sugerida por Urcid, faltando de registrar el glifo que ocuparía la octava posición del calendario, y que en el posclásico corresponde al día Conejo.
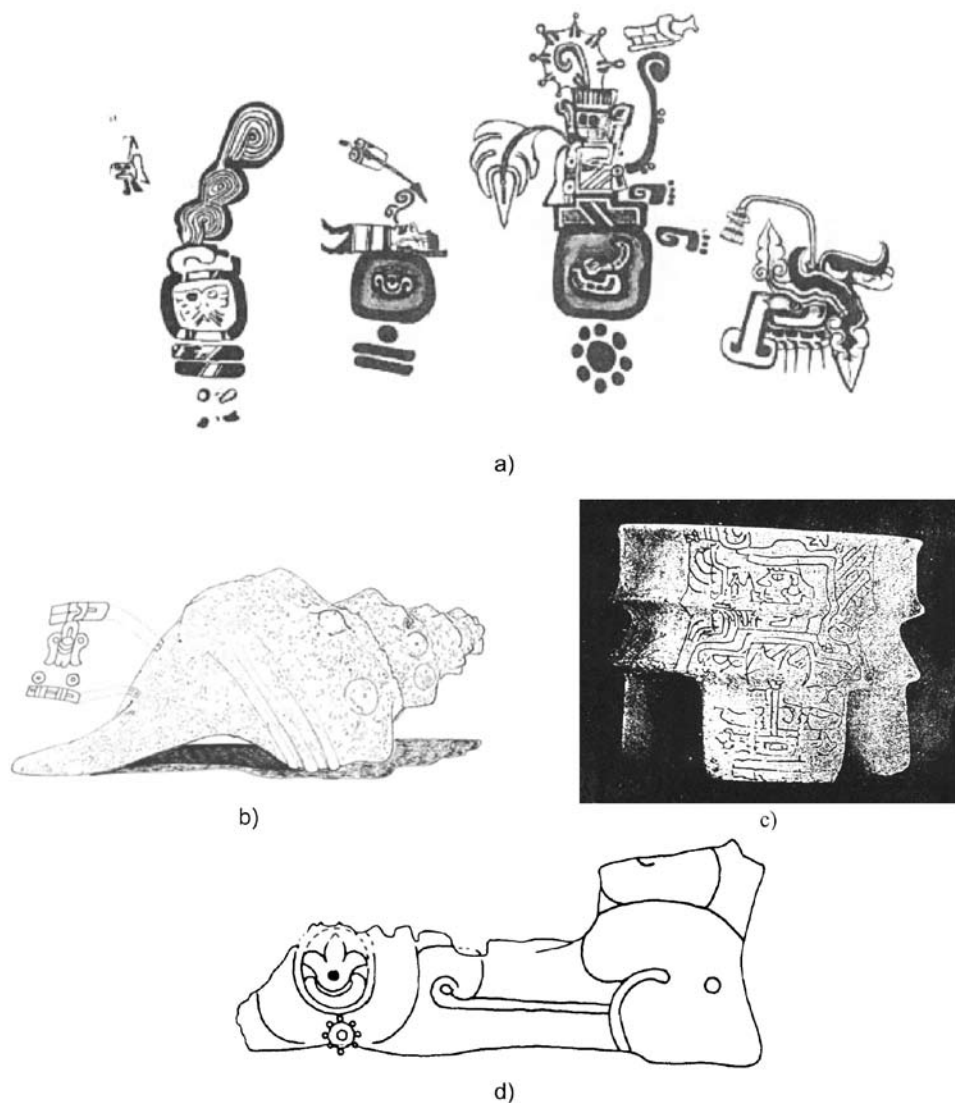
Figura 7. Ejemplos de la escritura ñuiñe en pintura rupestre y objetos portátiles.

a). Pintura rupestre del Puente Colosal, Tepelmeme, Coixtlahuaca, con un texto ñuiñe de forma linear. Retomado de Rincon-Mautner 1995.

b). Caracol trompeta procedente de Las Flores, Tepelmeme, grabado con un glifo calendárico grabado en su cuerpo. Retomado de Rivera y Malbrán 2001.

c). Cajete de alabastro con diseños incisos procedente de Añañe, Mixteca Alta. Retomado de Chavero 1906.

d). Mandíbula grabada, Eloxochitlán, Sierra Mazateca. Retomado de Winter y Urcid 1990.

Nombre del día	Representación gráfica		
Lagarto			
Relámpago			
Búho / Casa			
Glifo Ñ / Glifo S			
Serpiente			
Muerte			
Venado		1	2
Conejo	Sin registrar		
Agua			
Nudo			
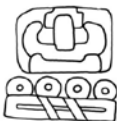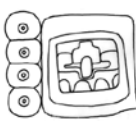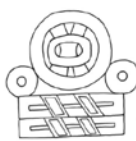
Figura 8. Tabla con los glifos ñuiñe identificados en el calendario de 260 días.

El glifo del año usado en la escritura ñuiñe esta formado por un triángulo y un círculo entrelazados y es el antecedente directo del glifo del año usado en el Posclásico en la escritura e imaginería mixteca (Figura 6b). El glifo ñuiñe es muy semejante a los tocados usados originalmente en la iconografía de Teotihuacan, especialmente en la pintura mural y la cerámica decorativa, donde forma parte del atuendo de sacerdotes, guerreros, del Dios de la Tormenta (Tlaloc) y de otros personajes. No obstante, su uso en Teotihuacan no parece tener connotaciones temporales, aunque existe un solo objeto portátil, una concha de caracol Strombus, donde aparece en combinación con glifos numerales. Así, en la Mixteca se tienen registrados más de una veintena de ejemplares con el glifo del año asociado con coeficientes y con dos secuencias de portadores del año; en la primera secuencia, formada por los portadores Casa, Conejo, Caña y Pedernal, usados en el sistema del calendario Posclásico, se tienen documentados los glifos Casa y Búho, que comparten la misma posición en el calendario de la Mixteca (Jansen y Winter 1980), además del glifo Caña. La segunda secuencia de portadores incluye el glifo Temblor (Glifo E), y que forma parte de la secuencia usada en el sistema zapoteco del valle de Oaxaca y de Monte Albán: Relámpago, Venado, Hierba y Temblor (Urcid 2001). Queda resolver la interrogante de si la secuencia de los portadores corresponde a dos momentos en el desarrollo de la escritura ñuiñe, como lo ha propuesto Urcid, siendo la secuencia de portadores del sistema zapoteco como la más antigua (Urcid 1998).

Existen algunos patrones recurrentes en la escritura ñuiñe, por ejemplo, los cartuchos que contienen glifos calendáricos y la colocación de los numerales del sistema punto y barra debajo del cartucho del glifo del día; en algunos monumentos se muestran los glifos calendáricos en un solo bloque, aunque como se verá mas adelante, existe la posibilidad de que varios sillares formaran parte de programas narrativos complejos.

Aparte del contenido meramente calendárico, los textos también aportan información sobre aspectos de la geografía política regional, por medio de glifos topónimos que representan, aparentemente, poblaciones locales o entidades políticas. Así, ya desde el Clásico hay referencias sobre los gobernantes y las localidades donde residían, gobernaban, o en algunos casos, sometían. Este tipo de discurso alcanzaría matices detallados en los códices del periodo Posclásico.

El contexto de la escritura ñuiñe

Para entender el significado de las inscripciones es necesario tratar de entender el ambiente sociopolítico de la región durante el Clásico y el tipo de contexto donde aparecen los testimonios gráficos. Los reconocimientos arqueológicos regionales nos han brindado la oportunidad de conocer la cantidad de asentamientos prehispánicos que existían, su ubicación en el paisaje, algunas características de su arquitectura y su relación de los monumentos grabados. Esta perspectiva regional tiene la ventaja de brindar un panorama mayor de la complejidad social que se desarrolló en la Mixteca Baja y de comparar los diferentes contextos y espacios donde se plasmó la escritura ñuiñe. El Clásico fue

un periodo caracterizado por la existencia de pequeños reinos en la región, asentados en centros urbanos ubicados en la cima de cerros y montañas, con arquitectura monumental como centro de las actividades comunitarias y políticas. El patrón de asentamiento muestra una jerarquía y complejidad político-social relevante que ocurre tanto en la Mixteca Alta como en la Mixteca Baja. Destacan dos sitios por su tamaño, jerarquía y por el número y calidad de piedras grabadas: Cerro de las Minas en Huajuapan y Cerro de la Caja en San Pedro y San Pablo Tequixtepec. Ambos fueron centros urbanos y posiblemente las cabeceras políticas de reinos constituidos por decenas de pequeñas comunidades de menor tamaño. Mientras que el primero de ellos ha sido objeto de excavaciones extensivas, obteniendo un cúmulo importante de datos sobre todos sus materiales arqueológicos, en el segundo solo tenemos información procedente de los recorridos de superficie (Rivera 1999; Winter 2005). No obstante, es posible comparar varios aspectos entre ambos sitios, entre ellos el del ámbito donde aparece la escritura, la reutilización de los monumentos grabados y los temas sobre el poder de los soberanos de ambas comunidades. Primero analizaremos algunas lápidas y dinteles procedentes de Cerro de las Minas para luego seguir con las piedras grabadas de Cerro de la Caja.

Lápidas y dinteles de Cerro de las Minas

Un ejemplo de la reutilización de piedras grabadas ocurre en la tumba 1 de Cerro de las Minas, que rescató John Paddock, en la década de los años 1960s' (Paddock 1970a). Empotradas en el muro del fondo del recinto funerario, las lápidas de piedra caliza blanca se encontraban acomodadas con la cara grabada expuesta, pero con la orientación de los diseños boca abajo (Figura 9). Si se les examina con cuidado, se podrá observar que la composición original de las piezas resulta en un panel de forma horizontal, que bien pudo haber sido usado originalmente en la fachada de alguna estructura arquitectónica de Cerro de las Minas, quizás en la decoración de un tablero.[9] La imagen representa a un señor, con el nombre calendárico '3 Ñ' dentro de un cartucho y sobre el cual se extiende hacia arriba y a los costados un tocado de plumas, mientras que a la derecha e izquierda salen volutas y ganchos; entonces, la composición de las lápidas conmemora a un gobernante entre volutas de humo o viento.[10] El hecho de que las lápidas hayan sido desmanteladas de su contexto primario y luego depositadas en un contexto funerario, nos hace reflexionar sobre el uso y función de la escritura ñuiñe. ¿Fue el señor 3 Ñ inhumado en la tumba y con él parte de su enseña individual? Como elemento comparativo, tenemos que en el valle de Oaxaca existen los registros de genealogías zapotecas,

[9] Compárese, por ejemplo, con los frisos estucados y decorados del sitio de Lambityeco, en el Valle de Oaxaca de la fase Monte Albán IIIb-IV o Xoo, y de los frisos zapotecos de la colección del Museo de Arte de la ciudad de Saint Louise, en Estados Unidos (Urcid 2001).
[10] Otra interpretación de la disposición original de las lápidas se encuentra en Winter 1996: figura 21.

a)

Lápidas
faltantes
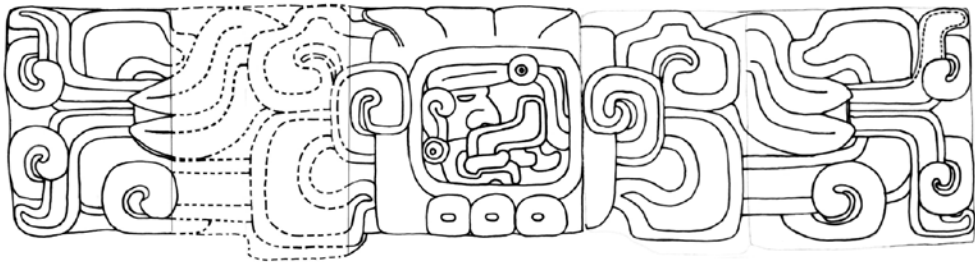
b)

Figura 9. Lápidas grabadas de estilo ñuiñe encontradas por Paddock en la tumba 1 de Cerro de las Minas.
a). Tal y como fueron encontradas, depositadas en un contexto secundario, fotografía retomada de Paddock 1970a.
b). Reconstrucción del diseño en su contexto primario.

atestiguados por medio de lápidas grabadas y pintura mural, donde se conmemora a los ancestros fundadores de los linajes; quizás el caso más impresionante de todos sea la tumba 5 de Cerro de la Campana, en Suchiquiltongo (Urcid 1991). Quizás el grupo de lápidas descubierto por Paddock en Cerro de las Minas haya servido, de manera similar al caso de las tumbas zapotecas, como el reconocimiento de los miembros de algún li-

| 1 Casa | 3 Temblor | 5 Búho |
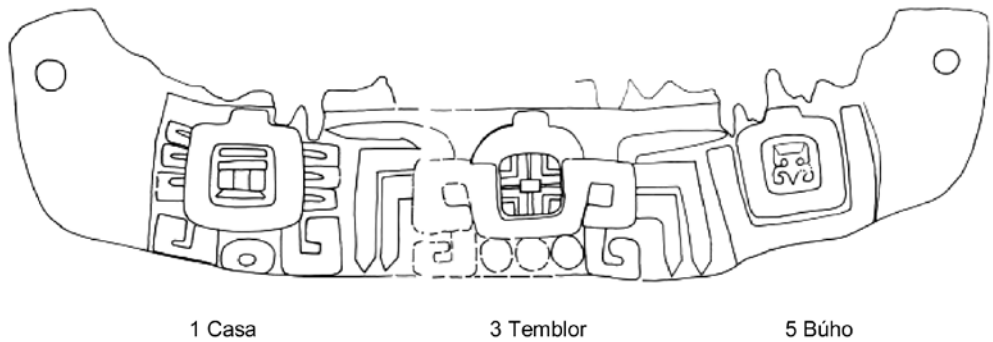
Figura 10. Mandíbula grabada procedente de Tonalá, mostrando glifos calendáricos.

naje a su ancestro fundador. Otras lápidas hechas en piedra caliza han sido encontradas en contextos funerarios y parecen tener una función semejante al caso que presentamos, aunque aquellas conmemoran fechas anuales, que incluyen el glifo del año y alguno de los portadores del sistema ñuiñe; es posible que estas marquen la cronología en la cual se inhumaron los individuos en cada recinto funerario.

Una imaginería similar a la presente en las lápidas de la tumba 1 de Cerro de las Minas, aparece en una mandíbula grabada procedente de Santo Domingo Tonalá, al sur de Huajuapan, y que pudo servir como una máscara bucal (Rivera 2004). En el cuerpo de la mandíbula se tienen tres glifos calendáricos: 1 Casa, 3 Temblor y 5 Búho (Figura 10). El glifo central muestra un grupo de plumas que, al igual que las lápidas de Cerro de las Minas, se proyectan hacia los lados; como los glifos 1 Casa y 5 Búho se encuentran a los costados del glifo 3 Temblor, este último quizás haga alusión a algún personaje importante, ya que además de ser el más prominente y de llevar el tocado de plumas, es el primero que el observador puede ver al colocarse la mandíbula como máscara bucal. Es posible que el objeto haya sido usado en ceremonias relacionadas con el culto funerario, la consulta a los ancestros y el inicio del Fuego Nuevo, como aparece en algunas escenas en los códices mixtecos Posclásicos. Si los tres glifos calendáricos representan a personajes, es posible que estos hayan sido venerados y conmemorados en la mandíbula, un objeto que hace referencia a los ancestros, y que a través de ellos el portador del objeto 'hablara'.

El patrón de representación de tres glifos también aparece en uno de los dinteles descubiertos en Cerro de las Minas (Figura 11b). Con casi 3 metros de largo, este dintel pudo servir como umbral en la entrada a algún recinto como una tumba o un templo, o bien a manera de sillar, en el muro del Juego de Pelota del sitio, no muy lejos de donde se encontró. El dintel muestra desde la izquierda hacia la derecha los siguientes glifos: 8 J, en una versión muy particular de la mazorca de maíz, 11 Hierba y 13 Nudo; al igual que la mandíbula grabada de Tonalá, el dintel de Cerro de las Minas menciona los

Los Inicios de la Escritura en la Mixteca

nombres calendáricos de tres personajes. La calidad y el tipo de grabado, así como las barras numerales, indican que la pieza fue elaborada por el mismo artesano y cantero que produjo el 'dintel de Huajuapan', exhibido en el Museo Nacional de Antropología, pero a diferencia de éste último en el primero el discurso solo consiste en numerar a tres personajes por sus nombres onomásticos. Mientras, en el dintel del Museo de Antropología representa a una gran serpiente con un glifo calendárico marcado en su vientre, 10 Temblor, muy posiblemente el nombre de algún gobernante del sitio representado en la forma de su nagual, o alter ego. Una imagen parecida la veremos en una piedra del Cerro de la Caja, en Tequixtepec, que discutiremos más adelante.

Un dintel semejante a los encontrados en Cerro de las Minas, ha sido reportado en el sitio arqueológico de Pueblo Viejo de Tecomavaca, en la Cañada de Cuicatlán, al oriente de la Mixteca Baja. Documentado a principios del siglo XX por Ramón Robles, el reporte del hallazgo hace referencia de una tumba con un 'códice pintado' en su interior (Robles 1932). Los dibujos que acompañan la información de Robles no son del todo claros, pero se puede distinguir la presencia de tres glifos calendáricos que incluyen numerales de puntos y barras al estilo ñuiñe; mientras que los glifos de los extremos parecen representar formas antropomorfas y zoomorfas, acompañados de los numerales 10 y 7, el diseño de en medio es claramente la representación de una serpiente enrollada, tal y como se le suele representar en el corpus de la Mixteca Baja; este sería entonces el glifo 9 Serpiente (Figura 11 c). Debido a su forma y diseño, este dintel se asemeja al patrón de representación de los glifos calendáricos de los dinteles de Cerro de las Minas y a la inscripción de la mandíbula humana de Tonalá. Como el ejemplar de Tecomavaca fue documentado en el interior de una tumba, es posible este mismo tipo de contexto haya sido el destino original de los dinteles de Cerro de las Minas; si fuera así queda por resolver la posible ubicación de las tumbas donde pudieron haber sido depositadas originalmente.

Los monumentos grabados de Cerro de las Minas, el principal centro urbano y cabecera política del valle de Huajuapan, exaltan la representación de personajes en la arquitectura pública, por medio de basaltos columnares grabados. Por otro lado, la utilización de lápidas en tumbas se asemeja a la tradición zapoteca de conmemorar a los ancestros difuntos en piedras grabadas y estelas. Todavía desconocemos si los habitantes de Cerro de las Minas llegaron a realizar programas narrativos como los presentes en Monte Albán y otros sitios de Oaxaca como Cerro de la Caja en Tequixtepec. Pero dada la reutilización de los monumentos, ejemplificado en el caso de las lápidas de la tumba 1, es posible que algunos testimonios se conserven aún en espera de nuevos hallazgos.

Los monumentos ñuiñe de Cerro de la Caja, San Pedro y San Pablo Tequixtepec

Ahora describiremos parte de la narrativa de los monumentos de Cerro de la Caja, en San Pedro y San Pablo Tequixtepec. Al igual que Cerro de las Minas, se encuentra emplazado en la parte más alta de un cerro empinado y pedregoso, al sureste de la cabecera
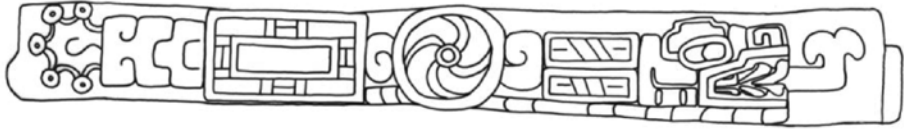
a)
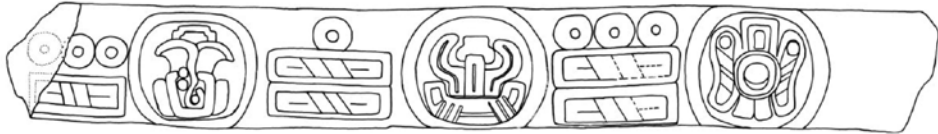
b)
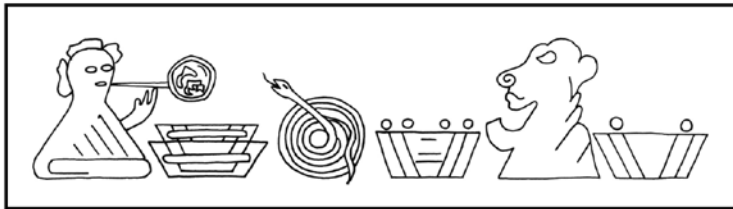
c)

Figura 11. Basaltos columnares con glifos grabados en estilo ñuiñe en la Mixteca Baja y la Cañada de Cuicatlán.
a). Dintel 1 de Cerro de las Minas, Museo Nacional de Antropología, México.
b). Dintel 2 de Cerro de las Minas, Museo Regional de Huajuapan, Oaxaca.
c). Dintel en la tumba 1 del Pueblo Viejo de Tecomavaca, Cañada de Cuicatlán. Redibujado de Robles 1932.

municipal moderna. Las laderas se encuentran terraceadas por muros elevados y en la cima se encuentra la sección con arquitectura monumental, donde hay varios montículos y plataformas, dos plazas, un juego de pelota y varias piedras grabadas dispersas entre las estructuras. Hasta el momento se han registrado 11 bloques con manifestaciones de escritura o iconografía ñuiñe y hay evidencia de la existencia de más bloques entre los escombros de los montículos principales.

a)
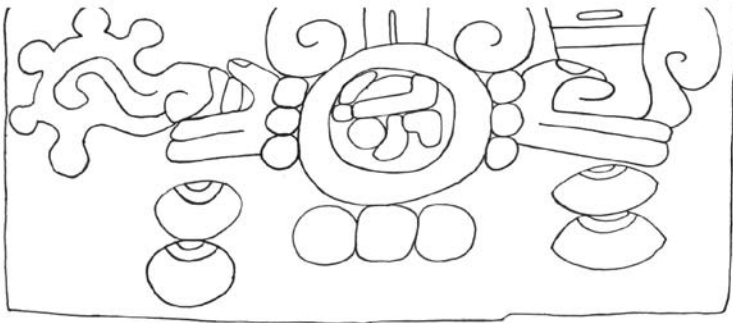
b)

Figura 12. Piedra 10 del Cerro de la Caja. Encontrada in situ en la esquina de la plataforma P (a), fotografía del autor, 1996. Dibujo del monumento (b), rotado 180 grados de su ubicación actual.

Aquí también tenemos ejemplos de la reutilización de las piedras grabadas, como se ejemplificó en la tumba 1 de Cerro de las Minas. Durante el mapeo del sitio, se localizó una piedra con grabados en la esquina sureste de la plataforma P, un edificio formado por grandes bloques de basalto negro, un material constructivo característico de la arquitectura ñuiñe de Tequixtepec. El tamaño masivo de la plataforma indica que puede ser una edificación de carácter público; varios sillares monolíticos sirven como base de los paramentos, lo que indica que la altura de la plataforma pudo ser considerable.

En el momento de su descubrimiento se hizo un dibujo aproximado de la piedra

grabada, designada como monumento 10 del Cerro de la Caja, pero no se pudieron apreciar con claridad los detalles de la inscripción, debido a que la superficie se encontraba cubierta de hongos y líquenes, además de que las condiciones de iluminación en ese momento eran poco favorables. Un dibujo incompleto de la pieza apareció en otro trabajo (Rivera 1999: figura 8.9). Meses después se pudo regresar al lugar para examinar con detalle el grabado, observando los detalles del trazo con luz rasante y dibujarla de manera adecuada (Figura 12). La cara grabada mide 1.48 m de largo por 1.03 m de alto. Al observar el diseño, se puede observar que los glifos se encuentran girados 180 grados, es decir, que la pieza se encuentra de cabeza y que probablemente esa no era su posición original. La clave para esta interpretación se encuentra en los tres puntos numerales colocados debajo del cartucho principal, que como ya se comentó, es un patrón característico en la escritura ñuiñe; además al formar parte de un esquinero debería de presentar otra inscripción visible en su costado, mismo que está ausente. Es posible que el sillar haya sido elaborado para ser expuesto en la misma estructura arquitectónica donde se encuentra ahora, pero en un lugar diferente, así que el contexto de la pieza no es de carácter primario.

El bloque muestra como elemento principal al glifo calendárico 3 M o 3 Relámpago (Figura 13). Dos manos, con cuentas en las muñecas, se encuentran a los lados del cartucho. Las manos que salen de los glifos calendáricos representan actos que realizan los gobernantes y es un patrón característico usado por los escribanos de los sitios de Tequixtepec. La mano a la izquierda del cartucho sostiene el glifo en forma de espiral, muy frecuente en las inscripciones ñuiñe; por su forma es posible que se trate de un caracol, quizás una *Pleuroploca gigantea,* que es representada frecuentemente como trompeta y pectoral en la iconografía de la Mixteca (Rivera y Malbrán 2006). La mano a la derecha del glifo cartucho muestra 2 glifos: un diseño con terminación en gancho y, a un costado de éste, en forma vertical, el glifo '77' del catálogo de Moser, o 'R-28' en el catálogo de Rodríguez. Hay un patrón constante en la aparición de ambos diseños, casi siempre aparecen asociados y acompañando al glifo 'espiral' junto con las manos del gobernante, como ocurre en la piedra 2 de Chinango. Por la distribución de este tipo de representaciones en monumentos ñuiñe de otros sitios, es posible que se esté representando un tipo de ritual común que desarrollaron los gobernantes de la región durante el periodo Clásico. Debajo de ambas manos hay un par de diseños ovalados con incisiones en forma de U en su interior, éstos representan pedernales. Como ya se comentó, las imágenes de pedernales en los monumentos públicos ñuiñe conocidos proceden en su mayoría de la región de Tequixtepec. Sobre el glifo calendárico hay un par de volutas y, en medio de ellas, una tira vertical con una incisión que representa un lazo o cordel, por lo que entonces el glifo calendárico conmemora al señor 3 M o 3 Relámpago. ¿Por qué se invirtió el monumento y se incorporó a la esquina de la plataforma? ¿Es posible que la pieza haya sido elaborada para enaltecer al gobernante y, a su muerte, ser colocada boca abajo? Es posible que estas interrogantes sean esclarecidas con la eventual exploración de la plataforma P de Cerro de la Caja.
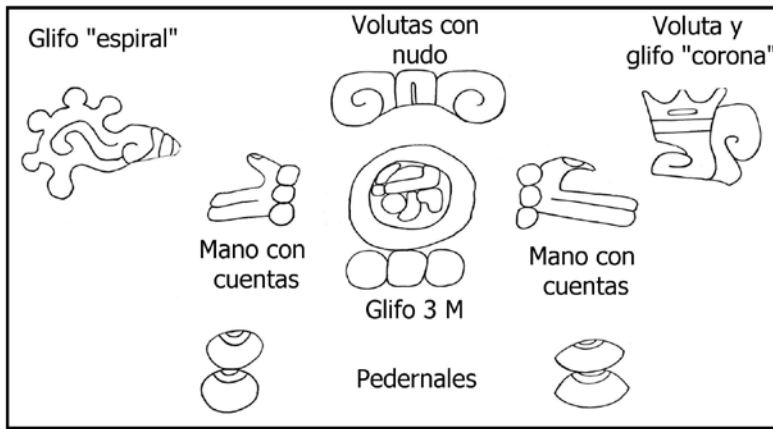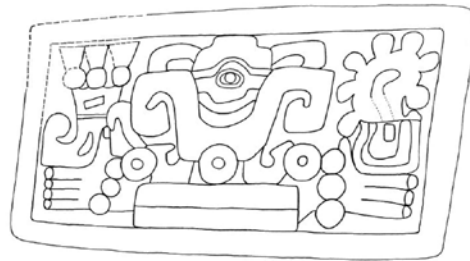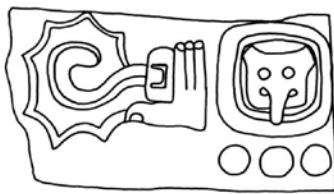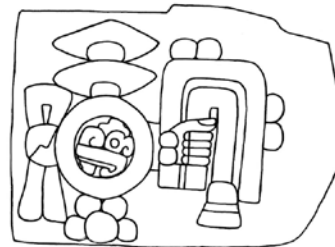
Figura 13. Análisis de la piedra 10 de Cerro de la Caja y su comparación con otros ejemplares de la sección de Tequixtepec-Chazumba.
a). Desglose de la piedra 10 de Cerro de la Caja.
b). Piedra 2 de Chinango.
c). Piedra 2 de Mixquixtlahuca.
d). Piedra 18 de San Pedro y San Pablo Tequixtepec.

La movilidad de los monolitos en el sitio es significativa si se analiza la ubicación de dos piedras grabadas que, separadas entre si por varios cientos de metros, muestran escenas similares (Figura 14). Además, su tamaño y diseño parecen indicar que en algún
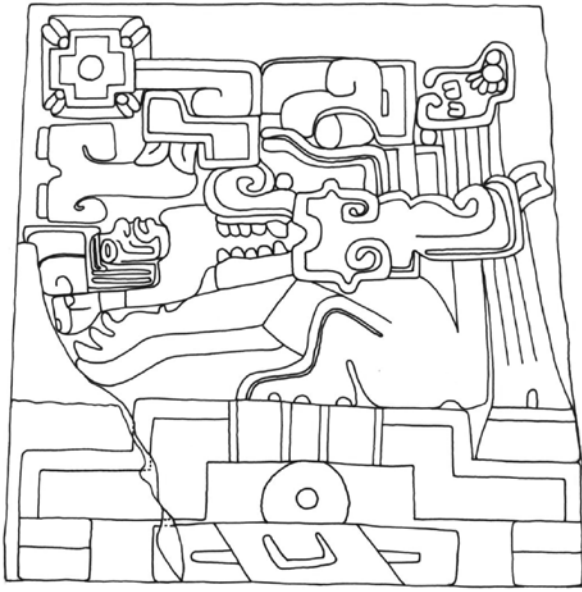
Piedra 2　　　　　　　　　　　　　　Piedra 3

Figura 14. Monumentos de Cerro de la Caja, San Pedro y San Pablo Tequixtepec.

momento fueron exhibidas en la sección monumental del sitio. Como en otro trabajo ya se ha abordado la temática de estos monumentos, mencionaremos brevemente su contenido (Rivera 2000). Las piedras 2 y 3 de Cerro de la Caja están elaboradas en bloques de basalto negro vesicular; la primera se encuentra aún en la cima del cerro, mientras que la segunda fue tirada en época reciente a la Barranca de los Chirimoyos, aunque originalmente se ubicaba en la cima del cerro, no muy lejos de la plaza principal. La piedra 2 muestra a un gobernante llamado 6 Jaguar, que porta un complejo tocado formado por la combinación de los glifos Lagarto y la máscara bucal del Dios de la Lluvia, colocado sobre un glifo del cerro, que posiblemente haga referencia al topónimo de Cerro de la Caja. El jaguar se encuentra devorando a un ser humano, extendido frente a sus fauces y sostenido por sus zarpas delanteras. Una escena similar a la anterior ocurre en la piedra 3, en ella se muestra a una serpiente con el glifo 10 Lagarto grabado en su vientre, algo semejante a la representación del dintel de Huajuapan, y que ha de ser el nombre del gobernante; al igual que en la piedra 2, aquí también la escena muestra a un ser humano siendo engullido. Por el tamaño y estilo de los monumentos, fueron elaborados para formar un programa narrativo donde se exaltaba a los gobernantes y el poder que ellos tenían como nahuales.[11]

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[11] Para una discusión amplia del sentido de los nahuales como protectores de las comunidades véase Jansen 2004.
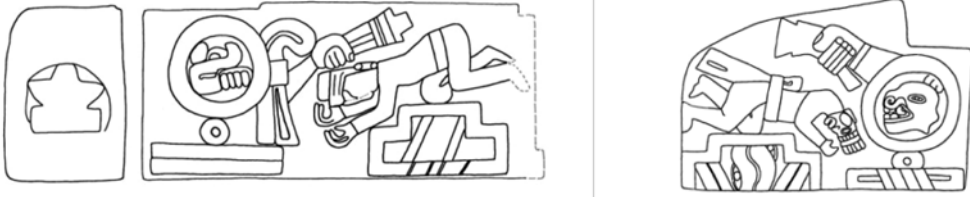
Piedra 1 de Tequixtepec.   Piedra 7 del Cerro Caja

Figura 15. Bloques grabados con escenas de conquista, procedentes de sitios arqueológicos cercanos a San Pedro y San Pablo Tequixtepec.

Otro ejemplo del tipo de discurso usado en el sitio ocurre en la piedra 7 de Cerro de la Caja, localizado no muy lejos del juego de pelota del sitio (Figura 15). La piedra muestra a la derecha el glifo calendárico 6 Jaguar, muy probablemente el mismo personaje representado en la piedra 2, de donde sale una mano que sostiene un arma, con la cual golpea a un personaje ataviado con una cinta en el pelo y un braguero. Mientras se inclina hacia delante, con su rodilla se apoya en un glifo escalonado de cerro, en cuyo interior se muestran bandas diagonales y en medio un diseño ondulado y con ojos, que quizás hagan alusión a la imaginería del relámpago o lagarto. El mensaje de esta inscripción es claro, se trata de una escena de sometimiento de un personaje que procede del 'Cerro del Relámpago' por parte del señor 6 Jaguar. La pieza debió estar empotrada en alguno de los recintos arquitectónicos de Cerro de la Caja, pues aún conserva un escalonamiento donde debía de empotrar otro bloque, de menores dimensiones.

Aunque procede de un sitio diferente, la piedra 1 de Tequixtepec muestra una gran semejanza en el patrón de representación con la pieza que acabamos de presentar. También es un bloque rectangular de gran tamaño, seguramente parte del esquinero de alguna estructura, en el cual se talló en su superficie más amplia, el glifo 11 M o 11 Relámpago, de la cual sale una mano con un arma con la cual se golpea a un personaje inclinado sobre el glifo de cerro.

¿Qué acontecimientos se encuentran detrás de estas inscripciones? ¿Es parte de algún acontecimiento ocurrido en la región durante el periodo Clásico? Posiblemente ambos monumentos sean un reflejo de la relación y el entorno sociopolítico de la región. Los patrones de asentamiento arqueológico nos muestran que coexistían diversos centros urbanos, como Cerro de las Minas y Cerro de la Caja, además de otros asentamientos de menor tamaño, quizás los mensajes sean un reflejo de la dinámica de competencia entre los diferentes reinos y de la defensa de las comunidades por medio de sus gobernantes.

Como hemos visto hay evidencia de que los monumentos grabados eran el testimonio de narraciones donde se entretejía la historia, la política y la ideología de la sociedad mixteca del Clásico. Así entonces, estos mensajes son el antecedente de los códices mixtecos posclásicos, con la salvedad de que están elaborados en piedra. Las piedras 2 y 3 de Cerro de la Caja son un ejemplo de ello, pero existen ejemplares que proceden

de otros sitios arqueológicos cercanos a Tequixtepec donde la conmemoración de los gobernantes y su ascenso también se plasmo en un programa narrativo. Dos bloques de piedra, las piedras 17 y 22 de Tequixtepec, actualmente en exhibición en el Museo Comunitario 'Memorias de Yucundayee', parecen centrar su discurso en el ascenso al poder de un gobernante (Figura 16). Ambos son de basalto negro vesicular, están hechos en altorrelieve y exhiben un estilo muy similar en el estilo y la técnica por lo que posiblemente fueron realizados por el mismo escribano. En entrevistas hechas a varios habitantes del pueblo, he podido averiguar que ambos ejemplares proceden de un sitio arqueológico ubicado al noreste de la cabecera municipal.

La piedra 17 tiene dos caras grabadas, es un bloque cuadrangular de gran tamaño, y por sus dimensiones debió formar parte del esquinero de una estructura arquitectónica. En los sitios ñuiñe se han encontrado en las esquinas de los montículos y plataformas, grandes bloques de piedra que servía para cimentar la base de los paramentos, y sobre ellos sillares rectangulares y cuadrangulares de menores dimensiones. En la cara izquierda de la piedra se representó al glifo calendárico 6 Nudo, sobre del cual se encuentra un símbolo de cerro y ascendiendo a él, un jaguar con tocado de plumas que sostiene con una de sus patas un glifo topónimo. Del lado derecho se encuentra el glifo 3 Mono, el cual se aproxima a la esquina, ensalzando un pedernal con una de sus patas delanteras. Por otra parte la piedra 22, de menores dimensiones, es un sillar rectangular con el grabado en forma horizontal y con un escalonamiento en su extremo izquierdo, que seguramente empalmaba con otros bloques menores. A la izquierda de la imagen se muestra a un jaguar apresando a un venado tendido boca abajo, con las zarpas del felino sobre su cabeza, la escena que sigue a la derecha está formada por otro jaguar que avanza hacia la derecha, llevando en su espalda a otro miembro de la misma especie, sentado, con la cabeza girada hacia atrás, como se le suele representar en la imaginería posclásica de los códices. En conjunto, la orientación de los personajes se encamina hacia la margen derecha, donde la piedra tiene un canto liso y bien labrado. Si se colocan los bloques uno junto al otro, resulta una escena en la que se presencia la procesión de un jaguar, que realizan en primera instancia el sacrificio de un venado,[12] seguido por su traslado en andas por otro felino y, finalmente, el ascenso en el cerro, con el nombre calendárico del personaje debajo del topónimo: 6 Nudo; mientras que del otro lado, el señor 3 Mono es testigo del acontecimiento. Una escena muy similar a la discutida, si no es que la misma representación, pero tallada por otro artesano, ocurre en la piedra 19 de Tequixtepec (Jansen 2004).

[12] En la iconografía maya hay algunas imágenes del venado como cautivo y siendo sacrificado antes de la entronización de algunos gobernantes (Taube 1998: 333).
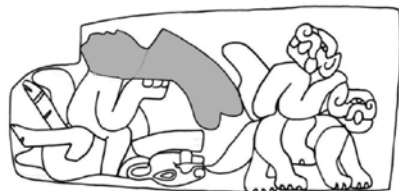
Piedra 22, bloque con escalonamiento para ser ensamblada en un programa narrativo.
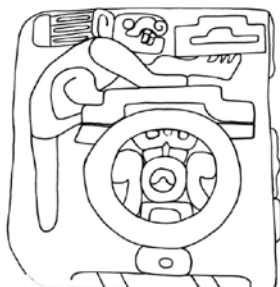
Piedra 17, lado A y lado B, bloque monolítico, usado como esquinero en alguna estructura de la fase Ñuiñe.

Sección dañada
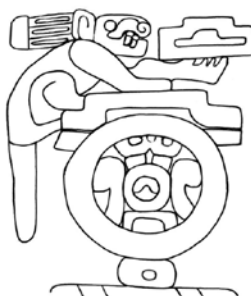
Orientación de las escenas.

Sacrificio de un venado y procesión de jaguares; posible personificación de gobernantes en un acto ritual.

"Entronización" del gobernante sobre un cerro. Jaguar con tocado de plumas. Glifo calendárico 6 Nudo.

Presencia del Señor 3 Mono

Figura 16. Piedras 17 y 22 de San Pedro y San Pablo Tequixtepec, dibujados a la misma escala.

Las vasijas efigie y la escritura

Las vasijas efigie, o urnas, también nos permiten entrever parte del uso de la escritura ñuiñe. Aunque tenemos pocos ejemplares reportados hasta la fecha, existen algunas piezas que muestran glifos calendáricos y que posiblemente correspondan a los nombres

de los individuos representados.[13] No obstante, la glífica de las vasijas incluye patrones iconográficos que incluyen emblemas y glifos que no contienen numerales. Un grupo característico de urnas ñuiñe lo forman botellones de cerámica de color anaranjado y café que muestran rostros humanos y de animales, o una combinación de ambos (Figura 17). Todos portan sobre su cabeza el glifo U, una versión resumida del 'ave de pico ancho' de las urnas zapotecas (Caso y Bernal 1952), pero en el interior de los cartucho los glifos son diferentes. Como las vasijas efigie eran depositadas en asociación a los entierros de personajes importantes de la sociedad mixteca clásica, es posible que algunas de ellas representen a las deidades, como ocurre con la versión ñuiñe del Dios Viejo del Fuego, encontrada en tumbas de Cerro de las Minas (Winter 1994). Hasta el momento, solo una pieza, una de las urnas adquiridas por Paddock en Huajuapan, parece mostrar a un personaje anciano, con un tocado en forma de puma o jaguar y que tiene sobre el pecho el glifo 9 Perro[14] (Paddock 1966, 1970b). Si en realidad se tratara de una deidad, ¿el glifo estaría dando su nombre calendárico?; quizás sea una evidencia del inicio de la representación de las deidades por medio de sus nombres calendáricos, un elemento ausente en el periodo Formativo, pero que marcó una constante en la escritura de los códices mixtecos del periodo Posclásicos.

Transición del Clásico al Posclásico

El abandono del estilo ñuiñe ocurrió en un momento de gran movimiento social y político en la Mixteca, y que también se manifestó en otras partes de Oaxaca y Mesoamérica; coincidió con la desaparición de los centros políticos del Clásico, la conformación de un nuevo orden social y la fundación de nuevos reinos. Aunque estamos aún muy lejos de llegar a comprender del todo los cambios, es posible considerar que el nuevo estilo, usado en los códices, en la metalurgia y en la cerámica, permitía un intercambio mucho más cercano entre los diversos pueblos de la región y de Mesoamérica. El estilo 'Mixteca-Puebla' permitió una comunicación estrecha entre las diversas comunidades, haciendo partícipe a la sociedad de aspectos relacionados con las deidades, festividades, rituales entre otros (véanse las contribuciones de Maarten Jansen y Gilda Hernández en este volumen). Así entonces, la región de la Mixteca manifestó un cambio en el registro de los testimonios históricos, políticos y religiosos; aunque el soporte donde fueron plasmados cambiaron, en el fondo, las historias sobre los soberanos, las comunidades y deidades, permanecieron (Figura 18).

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[13] Véase por ejemplo el caso de una vasija efigie en una colección privada en Francia (Urcid 2002).
[14] Javier Urcid, en comunicación personal 2002, es de la opinión de que el glifo en cuestión es 9 Venado. No obstante, la forma alargada del hocico y la ausencia de las astas y de la lengua de fuera, características principales del glifo venado, hacen pensar de que se trata de una versión temprana del glifo Perro.

Figura 17. Vasijas efigie de estilo ñuiñe con iconografía y glifos.
a). Vasija efigie, Aguaje el Zapote, Chichihualtepec.
b). Vasija efigie, procedencia atribuida a San Pedro y San Pablo Tequixtepec. Dibujo a partir de una acuarela de Eduard Seler preservada en el archivo del Ibero-Amerikanisches Institut PK, Berlín, Alemania.
c). Vasija efigie, Huajuapan; dibujo a partir de Paddock 1966. figura 235.
d). Vasija efigie, Cerro de Ocotlán, Chazumba; dibujo a partir de una fotografía en Caso y Bernal 1952. figura 502.

ESTILO MIXTECA-PUEBLA,
PERIODO POSCLÁSICO
850-1521 d.C.

Anciana con huipil y rodeada con
bolitas.
Tlaxiaco.

Piedra con el glifo 4 Conejo,
Piedra de Tlaxiaco.

ESTILO ÑUIÑE,
PERIODO CLÁSICO
400-850 d.C.

Señor "2 Lluvia"
Disco de piedra de Cerro de las Minas

Glifo "9 Serpiente" Piedra 1
del Cerro Encantado, Tlaxiaco

ESTILO ÑUU YATA PERIODO
FORMATIVO TARDÍO
400 a.C. – 200 d.C.

Estela de Yucuita

Estatuilla de piedra verde

Figura 18. Estilos de representación gráfica usados en el Oeste de Oaxaca desde el Formativo al Posclásico.

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Los Inicios de la Escritura en la Mixteca

Javier Urcid

An Ancient Story of Creation from San Pedro Jaltepetongo

The painted murals found in tomb 1 at Jaltepetongo, dated on the basis of their style and the associated ceramics between 600 and 800 CE, contain a remarkable and complex visual narrative. [1] While the paintings undoubtedly have a historical dimension, the rendered protagonists appear to enact a story of creation with several passages that are parallel to both Maya (as recounted in the Popol Vuh) and Central Mexican (as recorded in the Leyenda de los Soles) myths of origin. The funerary context of the murals makes of the visual narrative on the walls of the tomb a close analogue to the entire genesis and creation of the 16th century noble Quiche lineages from Highland Guatemala. The paintings constitute a statement of the hereditary rank that the occupants of the tomb attained since the beginning of time, when the cosmos was created.

The story of creation as known from the Popol Vuh is of course a later version of a much older myth, one that can be traced back to at least the Late Formative (ca. 100 BCE) in the murals recently discovered at San Bartolo, in the southern Maya lowlands (Saturno, Taube, and Stuart 2005; Saturno, Stuart, and Beltrán 2006; Hurst n.d.), to Early Classic times in the Pacific littoral of Chiapas and Guatemala (Laughton 1998), and to Late Classic times in several parts of Mesoamerica, including the central Gulf Coast Lowlands (Koontz 2003), the Maya area, and now northwestern Oaxaca.[2] The most abundant corpus with diverse vignettes of the story comes from a fair amount of painted ceramic vessels that were manufactured between 600 and 900 CE in both the Maya Highlands and Lowlands (Coe and Kerr 1997; Reents-Budet 1994). The finding in Jaltepetongo represents coeval evidence to that of the Maya polychrome vessels and underscores the wide geographical distribution that such a story of creation had in ancient Mesoamerica.

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[1] Special thanks to Raúl Matadamas for his kind invitation to visit the tomb with him in the Summer of 1995, when extensive notes on the murals were made. The logistical and computer-based support of my brother Gonzalo made it possible to generate the drawings presented here. This essay is dedicated to my mother. Her strength and wisdom have been a constant source of inspiration.

[2] Matadamas (2001: 193-194, and 2005: 399) made *in passim* the first references to a similarity between a scene in the murals of tomb 1 from Jaltepetongo and an event in the epic account from the Popol Vuh. Yet, his published descriptions and interpretations of the murals have not pursued several other parallelisms. For the argument of late Nahua influence on the Popol Vuh, see Graulich 1995.

The geographic and historic context

San Pedro Jaltepetongo is today a community of Mixtec speaking people located in the piedmont (at 1860 meters above sea level) of the mountain range that delimits on the west the gorge of the Río Grande, a narrow and deep canyon known as the Cuicatlan Cañada between northwestern Oaxaca and southern Puebla (Figure 1).[3] The community is flanked on the west by the basin of the Río Apoala and on the east by that of the Río Tomellín. To the south raises a 200 meters tall hill known as Diquiyucu, at the top of which one can have a commanding view of the Mixteca Alta and most of the Cañada de Cuicatlan (Matadamas 1997: 201). The region where the community is located forms a linguistic boundary with the Zapotec and Chinantec (to the southeast), Cuicatec (to the east), and Chocho-Popoloca (to the west and north) languages.

The modern community is settled in a semi-dispersed fashion over the remains of an ancient occupation that left much terracing on the landscape. The tomb itself, found on flat terrain in an area of extensive karstic exposures, is some 500 meters west of an architectural complex of three mounds surrounding a plaza (Matadamas 2005: 392). The tallest mound, on the north side of the plaza, is approximately five meters tall, and the two other platforms (on the east and west sides) are less than that.[4] Several other tombs have been found at Jaltepetongo, but these were seemingly reused and then filled in by the ancient occupants apparently after their roofs collapsed.[5]

The Mixtec linguistic affiliation of Jaltepetongo can be traced back to at least the second half of the 16th century. In 1580, the community was subject to the Corregimiento of Cuautla (today San Miguel Huautla) and was briefly described in the Relación Geográfica of that political capital. Cuautla was in turn subject to the kingdom of Coixtlahuaca, which in turn paid tribute to the Triple Alliance (Acuña 1984: 137-159). The RG mentions that Agustín de Salinas, from the city of Antequera (now Oaxaca City), had the town of *Xaltepetongo* in encomienda, and that a clergyman living in Cuautla, but under the jurisdiction of the bishopric of Antequera, visited and conducted proselytizing activities in the community. According to the census, the etymology of Xaltepetongo, a Nahuatl name, is 'Small Sandy Hill' (from *Xal[li]*, sand; *tepe[tl]*, hill; *ton[tli]*, small; and *co*, a locative suffix). Yet, the Mixtec name of the community (not given), meant in

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[3] Matadamas (1997: 201) reports that, as of 1996, the community included some 300 Mixtec speakers.

[4] In a previous publication, Matadamas (1997: 201) reported that the tomb is located 400 meters west of the 'pre-Hispanic ceremonial building, which is formed by two structures with large courtyards' (translated by the author).

[5] In an earlier publication, Matadamas (1997: 201 and 203) states that two tombs were cleared in 1994, and that tomb 2, built approximately at the same time as tomb 1, must have been painted as well since remnants of red and black pigment were still discernable on the masonry walls (not dug into the karstic formation). In addition, the stucco floor was painted red. He asserts that the tomb had been reused during Postclassic times (900-1500 ACE) and later looted. The only artifact in the tomb was a gilded sheet pendant.
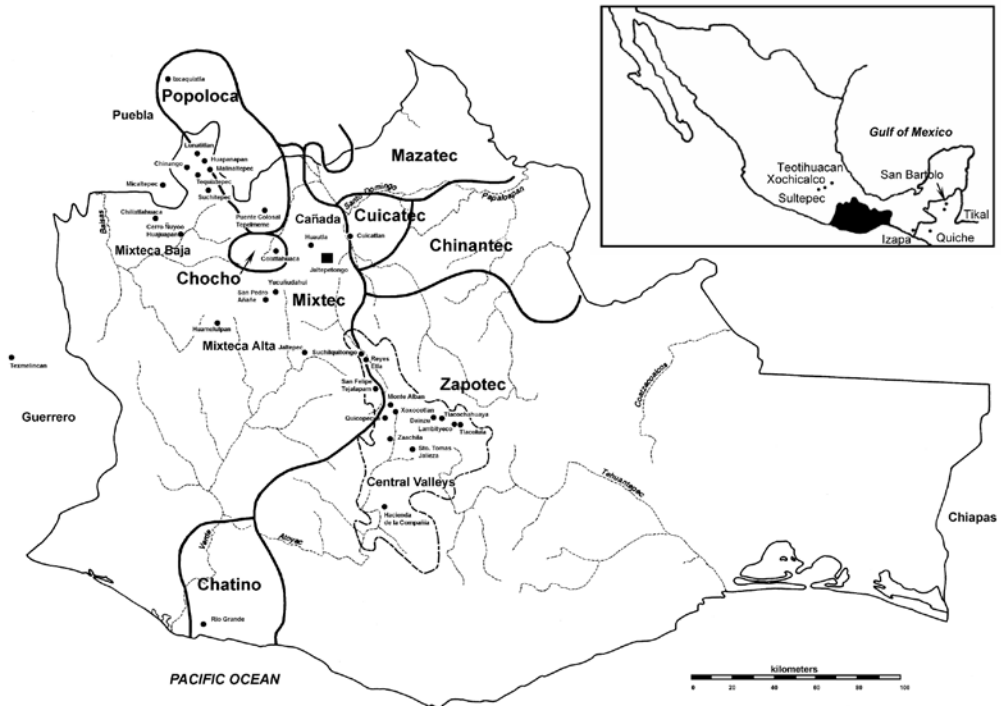
Figure 1. Map showing sites and linguistic groups mentioned in the text.

the Mexican language '*Papalotlayagua*', that is, 'Hill of the Butterflies'. Later on, however, the RG states that Jaltepetongo was settled between two hills named *Yocoxicna* (a Mixtec name) and *Cuztictepec* (a Nahuatl name), giving only the meaning of the latter as 'Yellow Hill'. Acuña (1984: 150-151, footnote 18) proposes then that the Mixtec equivalent of that name would be *Yucu/cuaan*, glossing the other Mixtec name of *Yocoxicna* as *Yoco Sitna Yuta* 'Grandmother of Water'. Today, the inhabitants refer to their community as 'Ayaba', a term without a corresponding meaning in Spanish (Matadamas 1997: 201). Perhaps this word is a remnant abbreviation of the 16th century Nahuatl name 'Papalotl-*ayagua*'.

The RG mentions that when the Spaniards arrived, the town was ruled by a man named *Yaxixayo*, an appellative that Acuña (1984: 150, footnote 17) glosses as *I'ya Xi Xayu*, meaning 'Lord 10 or 11 Rabbit'.[6] The inhabitants paid him cotton mantles as tribute. The main sustenance at the time appears to have been maize, as people relied on eating toasted 'tortillas'. This staple was complemented by beans and squash. Their

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[6] Acuña translated incorrectly the name as '1 Rabbit'. The translation given above is based on data about Mixtec day names and numerals compiled by Smith (1973: 24-26) and Caso (1977: 163-164, Appendix 1).

agricultural economy was supplemented by the foraging of medium-sized birds, rabbits, and deer, as well as by keeping chickens and tending house gardens with fruit trees brought from Spain. Cotton clothing was seemingly the norm, although only male garments are described as 'zarahueles', shirts, and hats. Yet, it is unclear if cotton was locally produced, although the RG states that a complementary economic activity was the production of a type of satin derived from the Castilian white mulberry tree. Jaltepetongo had apparently few springs that at times got dry, and although the waters from a stream at the bottom of the piedmont (not named) were used to irrigate some lands, apparently most people worked the alluvial soils along the Río Grande own by the inhabitants of the town of Cuicatlan.

Regarding the religious practices of the time, the census states that the inhabitants made stone and wooden images of their gods, dressing them in red mantles. People is said to have practiced self-sacrifice by bleeding their earlobes and tongue, smearing the blood onto the images. During their rituals, the participants danced under music from trumpets and other instruments, drinking and intoxicating themselves with 'wine from the land' (pulque?). According to the RG Jaltepetongo and the town of Jaltepec – to the south – were traditional enemies and were at war. People fought using cotton armory, clubs hafted with obsidian blades, bows and arrows, and shields made out of reed. The census also alludes to the practice of anthropophagi of people slain in warfare.

The impact of the Spanish intrusion and conquest is hinted at by references to longer life-spans and healthier conditions prior to their arrival, and how the population of the settlement was decimated by disease, from approximately one thousand inhabitants to just one hundred and thirty. The writer of the RG, however, attributes the prevailing unhealthy conditions, including fevers, smallpox, and blood clots to the hot weather, hinting at some of the local curing practices based on the use of a local plant resembling lettuce called *xiupatle* (*xiuhpatli*, a Nahuatl word meaning 'medicinal plant'), which was grinded and then drank. Buildings and houses were made of materials readily available, like stone, lime and sand. The flat roofs were built with wood (beams and/or planks) covered with masonry, a construction technique not pursued any more, as traditional houses today have slanted roofs thatched with palm (cf. Matadamas 1997: 202).

Tomb 1 from San Pedro Jaltepetongo

In 1994, while performing community work, local people accidentally found the tomb about 400 meters to the west of the community's center and adjacent to the south wall of the modern cemetery (Matadamas 1997: 201). It appears that through the process of filtration and internal erosion, a substantial amount of earth and pulverized lime had accumulated inside the tomb, and when the crypt was opened through its entrance and objects retrieved, these depositions were tossed against the walls of the tomb. This in turn covered and in a certain way protected the paintings. By the time archaeological salvage work began, few human bones and offerings remained inside. While the contents have
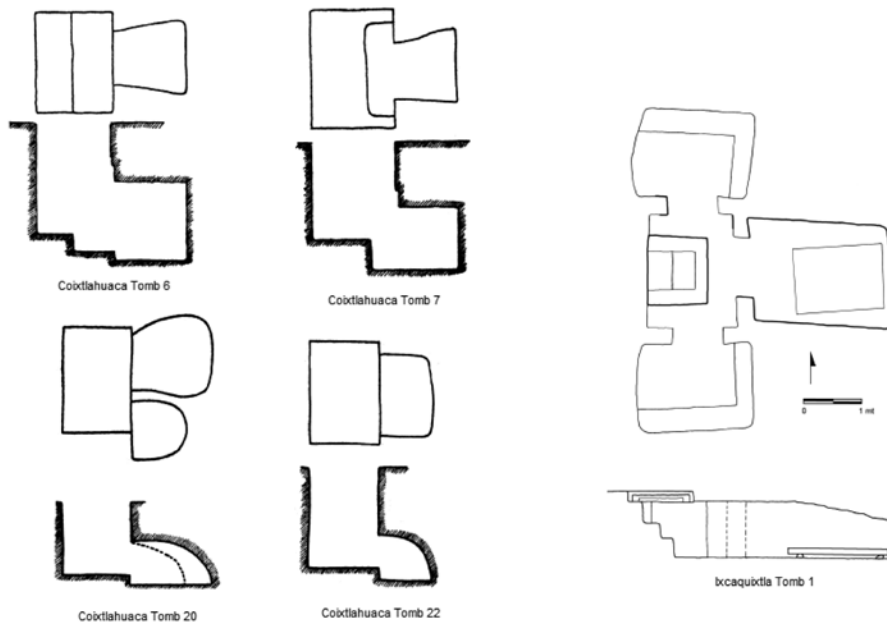
Figure 2. Tombs dug into limestone formations in the valley of Coixtlahuaca and Southern Puebla (drawings of tombs from Coixtlahuaca after Bernal 1949: 21 and 25; drawing of tomb from Ixcaquixtla modified

not been published, the tomb had the remains of at least two adult male individuals, one approximately 30 to 35 years old at the time of death, and the other between 35 and 50 years old (Matadamas 1997: 208 and 2001: 187). The ceramic assemblage included conical bowls of fine gray paste, fragments of braziers with appliqué decoration of a sandy brown and red-brown pastes, and cylindrical bowls or vases of light brown fine paste decorated inside and outside with a red-orange slip (Matadamas 2005: 395). These forms are chronologically placed by Matadamas (1997: 208) ca. 800 CE.

The tomb was built by excavating into the limestone formation characteristic of the region. Discontinuous karstic exposures cover extensive portions on this edge of the Cuicatlan Cañada all the way to the Coixtlahuaca Valley, to the west, and into southern Puebla to the northwest, where similar tombs have been reported (Bernal 1949; Cervantes Rosado et al. 2005a and 2005b). While there is much variability in the tombs found in northwestern Oaxaca and southern Puebla, the most common features include steps to gain access to a single chambered crypt and the concave vaulting of their ceilings (Figure 2). Tomb 1 from Jaltepetongo has an approximately rectangular floor plan with its longest axis aligned in a West-East direction and with a concave roof with three 'ribs' on the east, south, and west cardinal directions that define four lobes on the vault (Figure
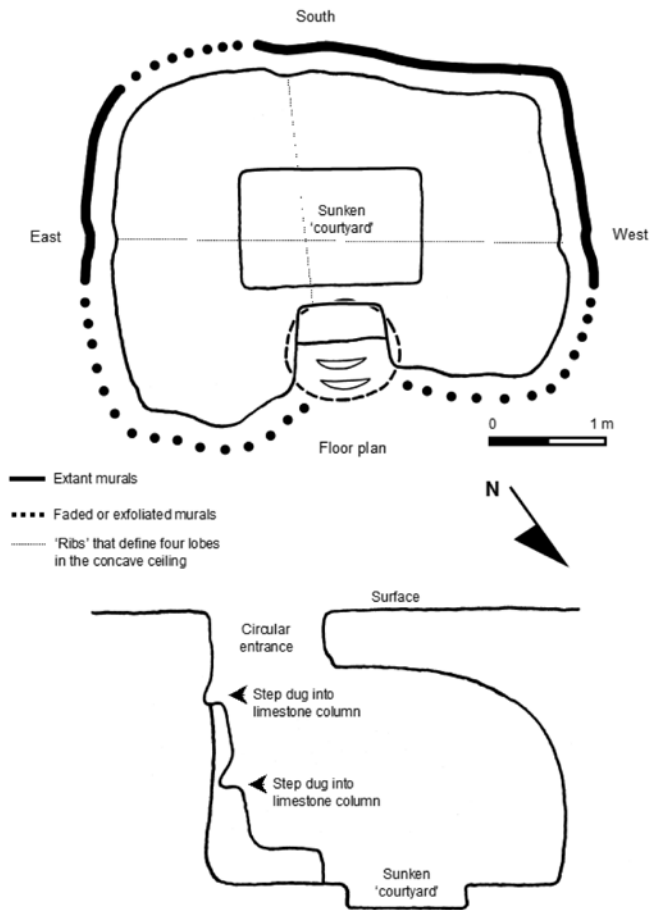
Figure 3. Floor plan and North-South profile of tomb 1 from Jaltepetongo.

3).[7] The southeast and southwest lobes are larger than the other two.

Access to the mortuary facility was accomplished through a circular opening in the northern end leading to a small staircase with three steps. The first two were dug into a protruding extension of limestone left for that purpose in the center of the tomb's north wall. The third step is a small platform leading to the floor of the chamber. This floor has actually a small quadrangular sunken area that is surrounded by a broad bench. This configuration resembles that of other tombs found in the Central Valleys of Oaxaca that

[7] Such a peculiarity in the construction of the roof can be seen in Matadamas 2005: plates 27.2 (the east 'rib'), and 27.3 (the south and west 'ribs'). The darker color of the latter 'ribs', caused by water filtrations, clearly define the southwest lobe of the roof.

An Ancient Story of Creation from San Pedro Jaltepetongo
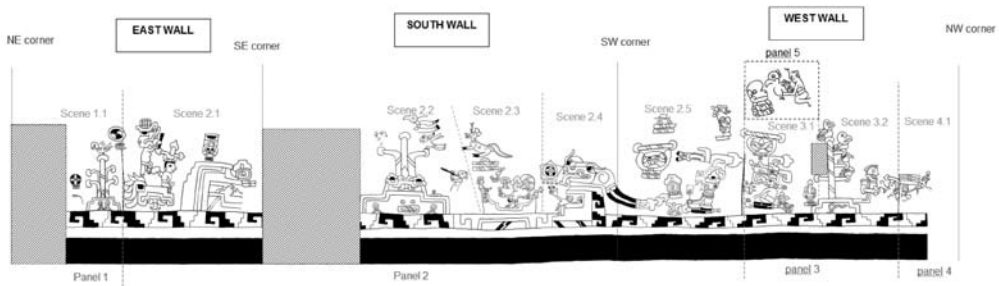
Figure 4. Rollout of the paintings indicating the emic division of the narrative into four panels (thick dashed lines), missing or illegible portions of the murals (hatched), the corners of the crypt (thin pointed lines), scenes within panels (thin dashed lines), and a later addition (stared square).

replicate the typical distribution of domestic space, a configuration suggesting that conceptually, crypts were construed as miniature underground versions of houses, making them literally 'abodes' for the ancestors.[8]

The walls of the tomb were covered with a layer of stucco upon which the narrative program was executed by painting lines with a red pigment. Apparently the broad bench surrounding the central courtyard, and most likely its floor, were plastered and painted in red (Matadamas 1997: 204). The inexorable passage of time as well as the circumstances that lead to the discovery and opening of the tomb impacted on the preservation of the painted murals. During the initial stages of the controlled cleaning of the crypt it became apparent that fragments of the painted stucco had differentially fallen off the walls, and in certain sections the collapse of the plaster had been almost complete. Such uneven preservation made it impossible to reconstitute the paintings and hence one cannot have a complete sense of the narrative as a whole (Figure 4). There are in addition details that are not clear in the extant portions of the murals or in the published photographs and drawings (Matadamas 1997, 2001, 2005). Still surviving in situ are paintings on the southern half of the tomb's east wall, in the western half of the south wall, and along the entire length of the west wall. Large portions of the murals are missing in the southeast and northeast sectors of the tomb. According to Matadamas (1997: 204), the southeast sector had originally a major vertical fracture that, prior to the execution of the paintings, was sealed with small stones and mud in order to prevent filtrations. Eventually, however, almost a square meter of paintings was lost here.

The rollout drawing of the painted murals shown in Figure 4 allows commenting on the evidence that bespeaks of repeated re-entries into the tomb. Looking at the execution of the painted lines it seems that most of the composition was done as part of a single

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[8] A similar but more elaborate layout characterizes tomb 5 from Cerro de la Campana, near Santiago Suchilquitongo (cf. Urcid 2005: fig. 5.4).

painting episode. However, as noted by Matadamas (1997: 205 and 2005: 404), a small set of paintings in the uppermost portion of the west wall ('Panel' 5 in Figure 4) was executed with thicker lines and with a red pigment of a different, darker tone characterized by a high concentration of pulverized mica. Matadamas (2001: 189 and 191) also argues that the careless appearance of this later paintings resulted from their hasty execution. This later characterization can be contested, as it ultimately rests of a value judgment about what is 'careless'. Certainly there is no evidence that the paint dripped, a physical detail that would support the deduction of a hasty application. Yet, the inference by Matadamas that 'panel 5' was painted later in the history of the tomb's occupation is convincing and further supported by the syntagmatic relations between its graphic units (two, facing each other) and those around it (whose graphic units face towards the focal point of the narrative).

Matadamas (1997: 205 and 208) proposed that the murals show evidence of corrections of mistakes and later retouching of the original paintings. The first inference is derived from the enlarged circle defining a rounded fruit in one of the trees painted on the murals [Matadamas does not specify which one], a change that left untouched a smaller original tracing. As evidence of later retouching of the paintings, he specifically points out to the lines that make up the torso of the main personage rendered in scene 2.5. Actually, several graphic units near this personage show a marked difference in color, having a tone resembling that of 'Panel' 5. Yet, rather than evincing errors, the description by Matadamas suggests that the murals still bear traces of the procedures used in their execution, with a first step involving the delineation of the general forms. A second step would have been the detailed rendition of the imagery by means of a second line. Since the argument by Matadamas regarding the evidence of later retouching is based on the darker color of the red strokes, rather than on evidence of differences in the paint brushes, modification of the original composition, or the superposition of different layers of paint, another possible interpretation is that the pigment that was used during the execution of a single painting episode had different qualities and chemical properties. Thus, the evidence suggests that the tomb was painted twice. The first episode was when an original composition conceived into 4 panels was executed by rendering a preliminary layout followed by the final version, and then a second episode took place when 'Panel' 5 was added.

These two painting events and the minimum number of individuals that could be attested inside the tomb on the basis of skeletal remains make it evident that the mortuary practices in this region of Oaxaca were similar to those known from the Classic period in the Central Valleys, whereby crypts were continuously reused. Repeated openings of crypts in Central Oaxaca lead to the accumulation of human skeletal remains and offerings, as well as to sequential painting episodes (Caso 1938; Lind and Urcid 1983; Middleton et al. 1998; Urcid 2005). The murals in tomb 1 from Jaltepetongo, however, differ in significant ways from those in the tombs from the Central Valleys. The paintings contain not only a genealogical record anchored to a native time frame by means
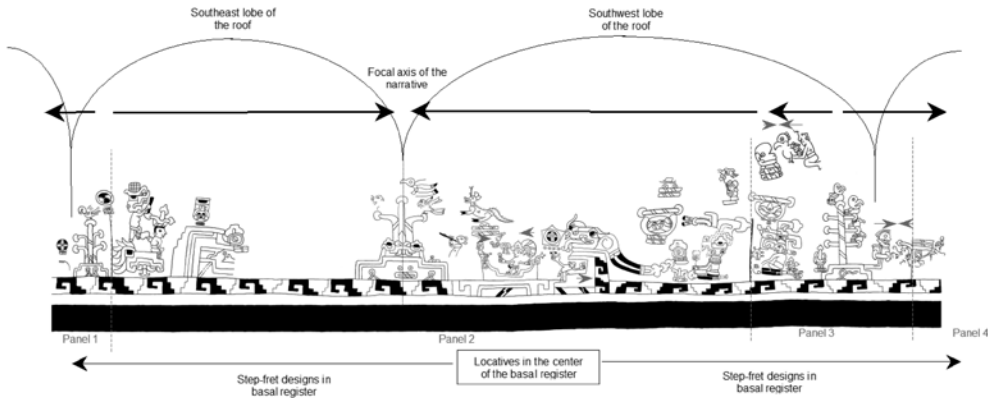
Figure 5. Patterns in the quadripartite structure of the narrative painted in the walls of tomb 1 from Jalte-petongo.

of Calendar Round dates – features present in painted tombs from central Oaxaca –, but renders as well several ritual scenes tied to stories of origin that seemingly take place in specific sacred landscapes.

The structure of the narrative

Several traits in the painted murals, including the presence of three trees, three verti-cal lines that define four panels, and the direction of glyphs and personages, make it evident that the structure of the narrative is quadripartite (Figure 5). The glyphs and personages in panels 1 and 4 tend to converge towards the entrance of the tomb, while those in panels 2 and 3 tend to converge towards the axis at the back of the tomb. In this sense the direction of half of the narrative is seemingly from South to North, that is, fol-lowing an opposite direction to the kinetics of entering the tomb. As in the case of the painted murals in tombs from the Central Valleys of Oaxaca, it is evident that the line of convergence in the south wall of the crypt defines the focal point of the narrative. For descriptive purposes the panels will be commented from left to right, a sequence that matches the latest one proposed by Matadamas (2005). Such a descriptive sequence is seemingly congruent considering that panel 1 is on the east wall of the tomb, the over-riding cardinal point of departure in ancient Mesoamerican cartography. Yet, given the quadripartite structure of the narrative, and as will be argued later in the essay, there is no reason to assume that the reading of the murals was necessarily or exclusively lineal (left to right or right to left).

The presence of three trees and their location in the murals indicates that the narrative makes reference to the four corners of the world.[9] Through these anchorages the cosmic framework for the origin of the world and the creation of the earth and the sky, as poetically stated in the Popol Vuh, is seemingly referenced:

> the fourfold siding, fourfold cornering
> measuring, fourfold staking
> halving the cord, stretching the cord
> in the sky, on the earth
> the four sides, the four corners (Tedlock 1985: 72).

This quadripartite order marked by directional trees is evident as well in the spatial-temporal cosmogram rendered on the first page of codex Tezcatlipoca. While in this native screenfold it is possible to determine the association between trees, world directions, colors, birds, deities, day names and year bearers in the calendar, the sacred trees in the murals from the tomb in Jaltepetongo do not include details that would allow establishing similar associations. Yet, the relative position of the trees in relation to the cardinal orientation of the tomb permits establishing the general correspondence between them and the cosmogram in the codex (Figure 6).

The trees in the murals display further clues regarding the general sequence of the narrative. The birds perched on the branches of the trees painted on the east and west walls face towards the entrance of the tomb. In contrast, those perched on the branches painted on the south wall face each other towards the central axis of the crypt. The comparison of the trees reinforces the argument regarding the central focal point of the narrative since the one on the southern wall is the most elaborate (Figure 7). Yet, the trees exhibit differences other than size. Those on the west and south walls have a main vertical trunk with out-flaring lateral branches that originate from the base of the trunk. The tree on the west wall has two paired sets of lateral branches while the one painted on the south wall has only one set. In contrast, the tree on the east wall has six subsidiary branches protruding perpendicularly from the trunk, three on each side. Trunks and branches have additional decoration that varies in each tree. The one painted on the east wall has four diagonal bands along the height of the trunk. The tree of the south wall has a single-line chevron near the base of the trunk and double-line bands converging near the top on both lateral branches. The same design is present in the tree painted on the west wall, except that the trunk's chevron is double-lined and has an additional diagonal

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[9] In the last publication by Matadamas on the subject (2005: 398, note 2) a note by the editors states that members of the project 'La Pintura Mural Prehispánica en México' saw on the northwest wall traces of a fourth tree, but the photograph of that wall (Matadamas 2005: 408, plate 27.13) shows only traces of the basal bands of the murals.

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East
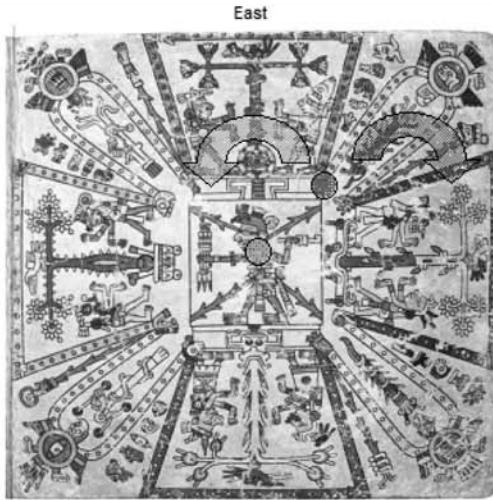
The red dot marks the point of departure in the reading sequence of the day names, and proceeds in a clockwise direction, moving in alternating fashion from the center to the periphery, up and down. The blue dot marks the point of departure in a sequence of 9 deities, proceeding counterclockwise (Anders, Jansen, and Pérez Jiménez 104: 164-165)

Page 1 of codex Tezcatlipoca

The tree of the North was apparently not painted. If so it may have been symbolically substituted by the steps that give access to the tomb. In this sense the tree was the conduit through which different levels of the cosmos were alluded to

East

South

West
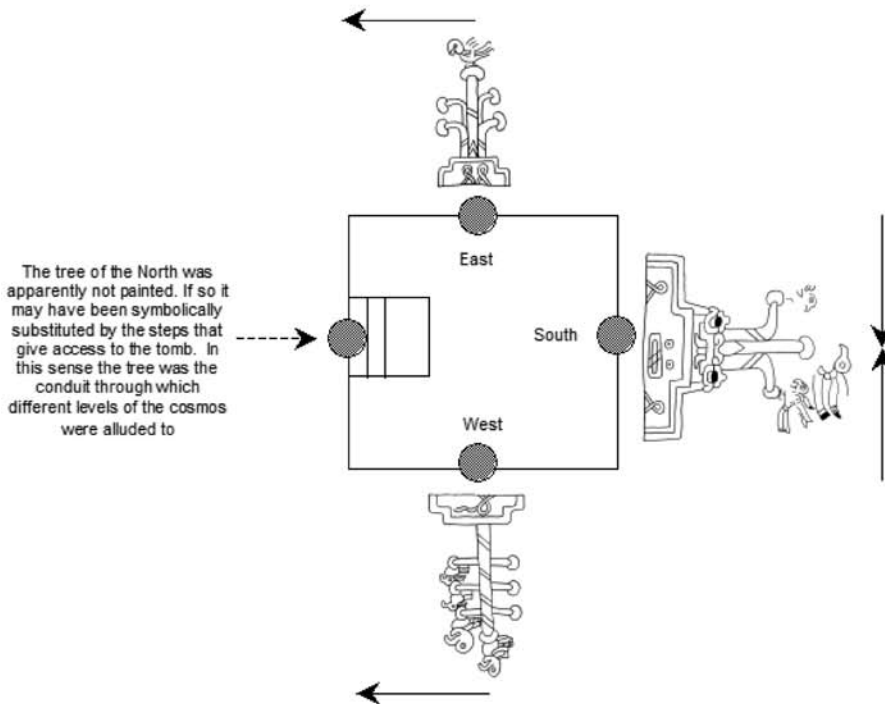
Figure 6. The trees in the narrative and their correspondence to those in the cosmogram painted on codex Tezcatlipoca.

The tree of the East   The tree of the South   The tree of the West

A

Sacred tree carved on slab MOX-104356. Unknown provenience but most likely from northwestern Oaxaca

Sacred tree with root painted on the upper register on the right jamb of tomb 125 from Monte Albán, terrace 27.

Part of a sacred tree carved on Monument 2 from Tlacochahuaya, in the Tlacolula Valley of Central Oaxaca

Tree with hanging fruits

Image of the Rain god (profile view)

Roots

B

Figure 7. [A] Comparison of the world trees painted in tomb 1 from Jaltepetongo; [B] other known coeval representations of sacred trees in Oaxaca.

1. Plant with roots in a mural from Teotihuacan. Specific provenience unknown (drawn after Berrin 1988: 139, Plate IA, first tree).
2. Representation of corn cobs with roots on a stone monument from las Parotas, Sultepec (State of Mexico) carved in Teotihuacan style (drawn after García Payón 1939: 251).
3. Roots in the 'Hill' sign on Monument 5 from Tequixtepec del Rey, Ñuiñe script from the Mixteca Baja of Oaxaca.
4. Glyph J (Maize) with two roots carved in Zapotec style on two slabs. Probably from Santiago Suchilquitongo, Oaxaca (Former Museo Frissell in Mitla, stones 8267 and 8307).
5. Sculpture representing a maize plant with a large root, from Xochicalco, Morelos.
6. Glyph 7J (Maize) with a root carved in Zapotec style on Monument 6 from Huamelulpan, Mixteca Alta, Oaxaca.
7. Glyph Reed with a root, lintel 2 of Temple 1 from Tikal (after Taube 1992: 70, fig. 13b).

Figure 8. Representation of roots in the Teotihuacan, Zapotec, Ñuiñe, Xochicalco and Maya graphic systems.

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band higher along the trunk.[10] Common to all trees, despite the different branch systems, is the depiction of what seems to be fruits, rendered as spherical caps at the end of the branches.

All trees have looped-signs at the bottom (two in the West and South trees; one in the East tree) that stand for the iconic rendition of roots, a pan-Mesoamerican sign used in the representation of a wide variety of vegetation (Figure 8).[11] Although the base of the tree on the west wall is now obliterated, it seems that all of them rested on stepped platforms, that is, the typical way of rendering a hill or human-made pyramidal structure in both the Zapotec and Ñuiñe scribal traditions. Other peculiar features, particularly in the trees from the South and West, will be commented in the next section.

Regarding the vertical dimension of the paintings, it may be noted from the rollout drawing in Figures 4 and 5 that they are divided into three horizontal registers. The bottom one is a thick band painted in a dark blue color, followed by a thinner band that was left blank. Then follows a band decorated with step-frets, a decoration that is interrupted in the center of panel 2. From this lower focal point, the orientation of the step-fret designs proceeds on both sides towards the entrance of the tomb.

Scenes in the Narrative

The published descriptions of the paintings group them arbitrarily into units, and these have been designated differently according to a right to left descriptive sequence (Matadamas 1997 and 2001) and a left to right sequence (Matadamas 2005). The units defined in the latter work were designated 1 through 12, a sequence that regrettably ignores the native organization into panels and the later addition of 'Panel' 5 in the upper portion of the west wall.[12] What remains of the narrative in the 4 original panels can be divided into 11 scenes on the bases of the facing direction of personages and glyphs,

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[10] Two of the world trees painted in the murals from San Bartolo, Guatemala, have as well diagonal bands on the trunks (cf. Hurst n.d.: Figure 3).

[11] Originally, Matadamas (1997: 204) interpreted the trees as maize plants. Recently (Matadamas 2005: 398, footnote 4) he convincingly argues that they are renditions of Rhandia sp., of the family Rubiaceae, a tree reaching some 3 meters in height and locally known as 'Zapotito', 'Vara de Cruz' [Cross-like rod], or 'Silbato' [Whistle]. The tree most often grows a central trunk with symmetrically placed subsidiary branches mimicking crosses. These branches bear four to five rounded fruits, and these attract macaws that to this very day migrate through the area. Birds pick on the fruits, and once dry, people collect them and use them as whistles. The wood from the trees is strong and flexible, making it ideal nowadays for building corrals for sheep. It should be added that the availability of macaws during the 16th century is hinted at in the 1580 RG of Cuautla, which states that prior to the arrival of the Spaniards, the inhabitants offered their gods feathers of macaws, quails, and other birds (Acuña 1984: 144).

[12] A useful 360-degrees view of the narrative appears in Matadamas 2005: 394, fig. 27.2a. The rendering however, is divided into two halves (North and South) and repeats two scenes twice. It also omits the blue basal band of the murals.

Table 1. Correspondences in the nomenclature used to describe the murals of tomb 1 from Jaltepetongo.

Matadamas 1997 & 2001	Matadamas 2005	Urcid
Set 9	Group 1	Panel 1, scene 1.1 east wall (East tree)
Set 10	Group 2	Panel 2, scene 2.1 east wall (The sacrifice of Maize)
Set 11	Group 3	Panel 2, scene 2.1 south wall (Mountain of Sustenance)
Set 8	Group 4	Panel 2, scene 2.2 south wall (South tree and blowgun scene)
Set 7	Group 5	Panel 2, scene 2.3 south wall (Ballgame scene)
Set 6	Group 6	Panel 2, scene 2.4 south wall (Offering in the Temple)
Set 4	Group 7	Panel 2, scene 2.5 west wall (Offering to ancestor)
Set 3	Group 8	Panel 3, scene 3.1 west wall (Offering to ancestor)
Set 2	Group 10	Panel 3, scene 3.2 west wall (West tree and skull-maize scene)
Set 1	Group 11	Panel 4, scene 4.1 west wall (2 personages and small temple)
Omitted	Group 12	Panel 4, scene 4.2 north wall, west side (basal bands)
Set 5	Group 9	Panel 5 added later, west wall, above (Offering to ancestor)

the syntagmatic relations between image and glyphs, and the depicted actions. Since the 12th scene ('Panel' 5) was added at a later time it will be described at the end. Table 1 provides the equivalences in nomenclature used by Matadamas and the one followed in the present study.

Panel 1

This panel covered much of the west wall, but only a portion of the southern most scene remains (Figure 9, left). Still extant, as one enters the tomb, is a calendrical name 10 Earthquake (10 E) and the tree of the West with a bird perched at the top. Part of a sign under the glyph 10 E is now much obliterated and unrecognizable.

Panel 2

This panel encompasses the southern end of the east wall, the entire south wall, and the southern end of the west wall. The panel seemingly contains at least 5 distinct scenes (scenes 2.1 through 2.5), although a portion of the murals on the east end of the south wall are completely obliterated. The left side of scene 2.1 includes two personages on top of the frontal view of a serpent's head (Figure 9, right).[13] This later representation

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[13] Scene 2.1 includes the groups defined by Matadamas (2005: 398) as 2 and 3. The reasons why they are considered here as a single unit rests of the facing direction of the personages (group 2) towards the stair-case of the stepped platform on the right (group 3).
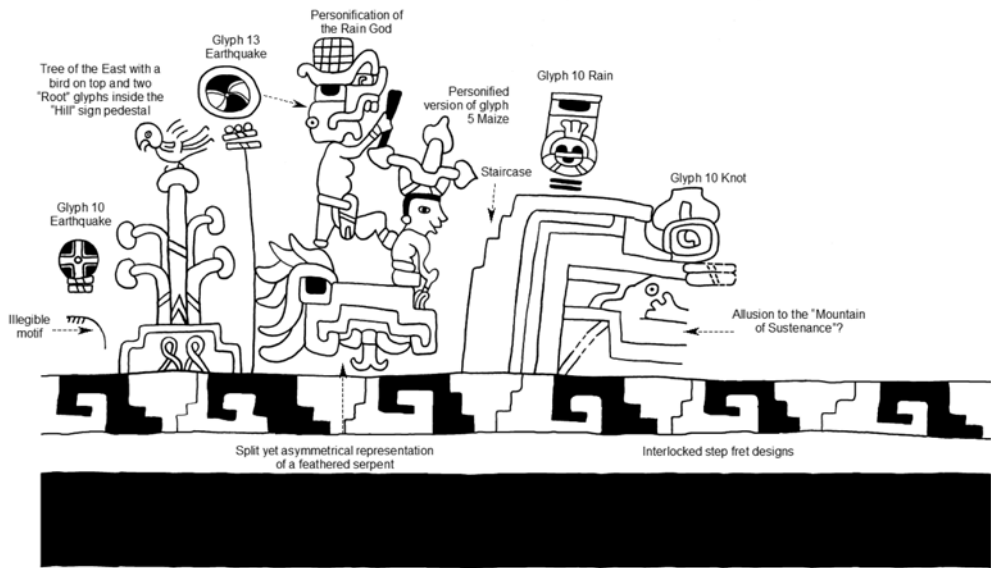
Figure 9. Paintings in Panel 1 and scene 2.1 of panel 2 rendered along the east wall of tomb 1 from Jaltepetongo (the bottom register with step frets is a graphic reconstruction).

was accomplished by rendering the serpent's head as a split yet asymmetric image. While the left profile of the serpent includes the eye and panoply of feathers, the right profile omits these attributes, leaving the unfolded jaws with upper teeth and sticking bifid tongue in full frontal view. Such a graphic recourse of asymmetric split imagery adheres more to Ñuiñe than to Zapotec stylistic practices (Figure 10A).

The personage painted on top of the serpent's left profile appears standing, with one foot over the serpent's feathers and the other one bent over the back of the second personage. This second figure seats cross-legged on top of the right profile of the serpent. The standing personage is an impersonator of the God of Lightning and Rain (glyph M), as can be deduced by the protruding double mask with teeth and curled ornament over the upper mask. The prominent eye has on top a U-shaped base that supports a squared and reticulated head cap. An earflare is shown on the left end of the face. This personified rendition of glyph M shares attributes with both Zapotec and Ñuiñe conventions (Figure 10B). Aside from the facial mask, the personage wears a loincloth that includes the waistband and the sash that hangs in front of the legs. This stripe is decorated by two diagonal lines and a vertical design placed at the bottom end. Since the garment clearly signals a male, the prominence of his breasts and stomach index a mature, perhaps even senior adult. Only his right arm, lifted, was rendered. Wearing a band on the wrist, he is shown holding an elongated object whose possible iconicity will be commented below. It seems reasonable to assume that the sign 13 Earthquake (13 E) painted above the vertical line that defines the division between panels 1 and 2 is the calendrical name of this personage.
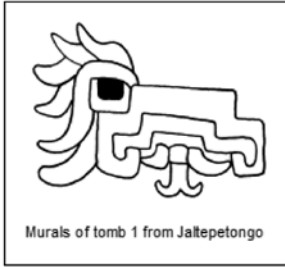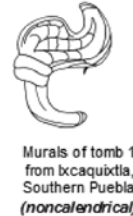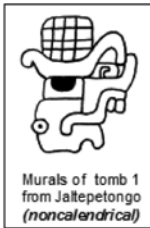
Figure 10. [A] Split but asymmetric imagery in Ñuiñe scribal practices; [B] face of the Rain God impersonator painted in the tomb and its comparison with glyphs M in Zapotec and Ñuiñe graphic conventions.

The seated figure appears wearing a loincloth, although only the waistband was rendered. The folding of the line that defines the chest and stomach emphasizes the seated position of the figure, whose physiognomy appears to be that of a young man. He wears an earflare and is shown with well trimmed hair. The large glyph J over his head clearly signals that he is impersonating the 'Young God of Maize'. Furthermore, the diagonal markings in the U-shaped base of glyph J appear to signal his calendrical name as 5 Maize (5 J). Only his right arm was rendered, and the figure has in the hand what looks

like a tasseled object held upside down. Regarding the graphic form of glyph J, it resembles both Zapotec and Ñuiñe examples (Figure 11A).

Both personages face towards a large platform that has a staircase on the left side. Several motifs were rendered inside the platform, but the condition of the murals in this portion precludes from assessing what they are. A glyphic compound that includes the glyph 10 Rain (10 C) under the synecdoche of glyph U (a single yet prominent eye) was painted at the top of the staircase. The upper profile of the platform seems to have a sunken profile in the center, where the glyph 10 Knot (10 A) was rendered. This two calendrical signs most likely have a nominative function, naming two individuals according to the day in which they were born or when their destiny was prognosticated through divination. While the name 10 Knot could have been associated to the depiction of a personage, now obliterated, the name 10 Rain appears to be a glyphic substitute. Both calendrical signs share similarities to both Zapotec and Ñuiñe graphic conventions (Figure 11B and C). A small area, slightly above and between glyph 10C and the personification of the God of Rain and Lightning, shows smudged red pigment, suggesting the former presence of a glyph that is now unrecognizable.

On first sight, the iconography of 13 Earthquake – with attributes of the God of Rain and Lightning – and of 5 Maize – with attributes of the Young God of Maize, seems to allude to the final creation that led to the origin of true human beings. According to the Popol Vuh, the forces that intervened in such a creation included a terrestrial deity called the 'Sovereign Feathered Serpent' and the 'Great Creator', a celestial deity described with epithets such as:

Hurricane,
Newborn Thunderbolt, Raw Thunderbolt
Heart of the Sky, Heart of the Earth
Maker, Modeler,
Bearer, Begetter (Tedlock 1985: 78).

Both deities discover that the necessary substance to create humans is maize:

The making, the modeling of our first mother-father,
With yellow corn, white corn alone for the flesh
Food alone for the human legs and arms,
For our first fathers, the four human works (Tedlock 1985: 164).

The large platform with a staircase painted on the right side of scene 2.1 is seemingly a graphic allusion to a key place of creation mentioned in the Popol Vuh:

…the rich foods filling up the citadel named Broken Place,
Bitter Water Place.
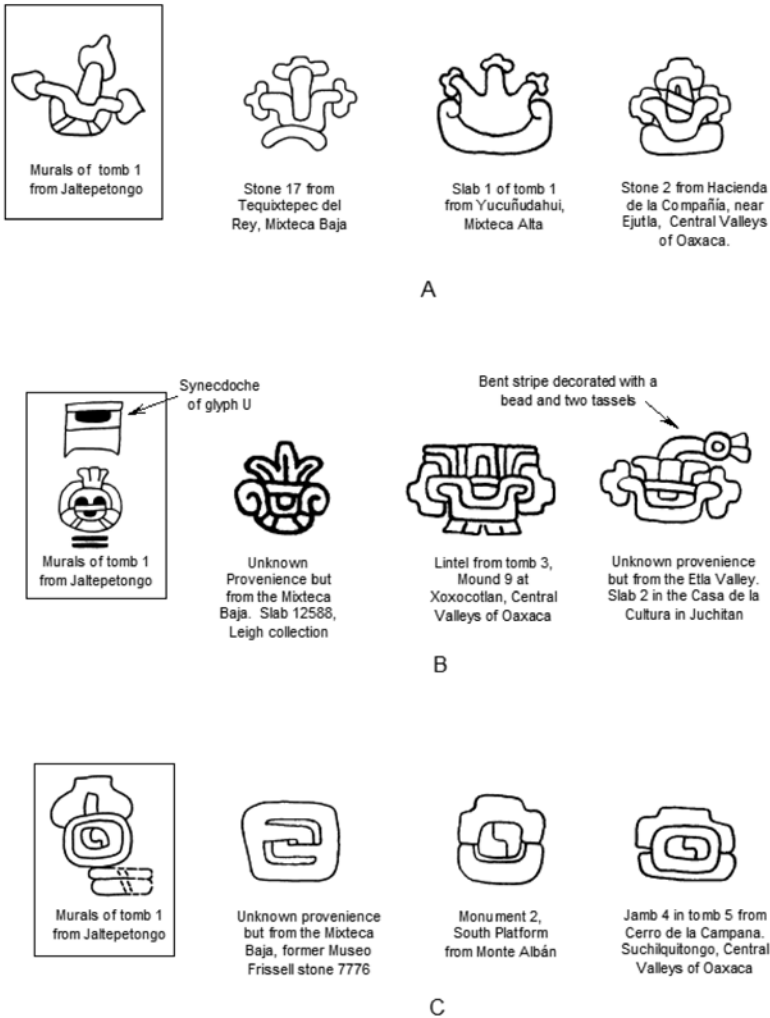
Figure 11. Comparison of glyphs painted in the tomb with Ñuiñe and Zapotec counterparts ([A] glyph J; [B] glyph C; and [C] glyph A).

All the edible fruits were there:
small staples, great staples,
small plants, great plants (Tedlock 1985: 163).

This place in the Quiche epic has a counterpart in several Mesoamerican stories of creation. It is the Mountain of Sustenance, a primordial place where, according to an anonymous collection of Mexica myths written in Nahuatl in 1558 (La Leyenda de los Soles) – maize is stolen by a Rain deity (Nanahuatzin) and his four attendants (the Tlaloques)
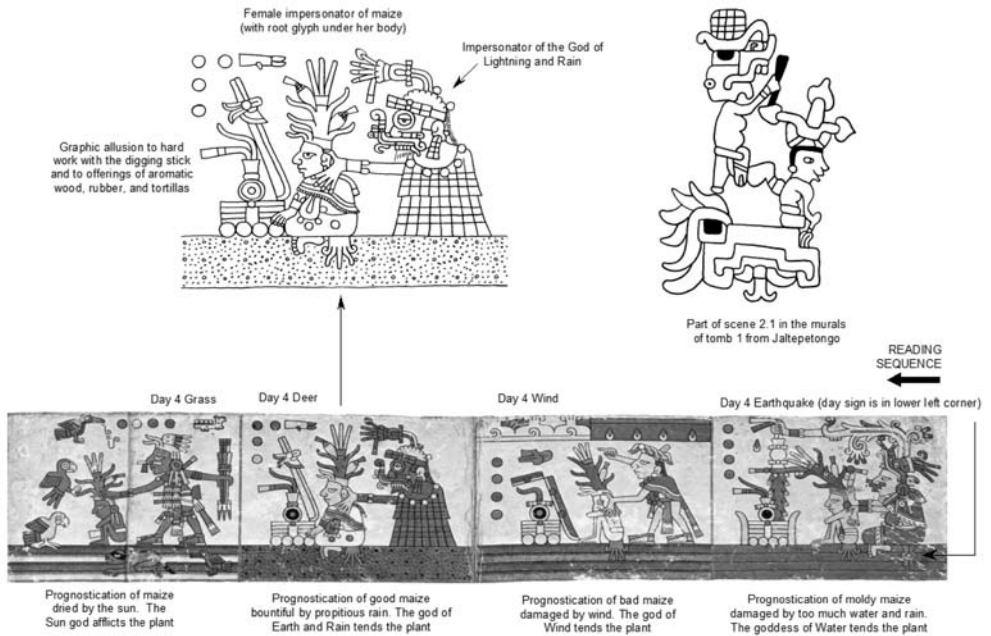
Figure 12. Part of scene 2.1 in the murals of tomb 1 from Jaltepetongo compared to one of the four prognostications for the sowing of maize on pages 33-34 of codex Tezcatlipoca.

by means of bolts of lightning in order to feed humanity. López Austin and López Luján (2000) cogently argue that the said passage in the Leyenda de los Soles is an incomplete vignette of a larger narrative, one that can be complemented through the analysis of contemporary, ethnographically documented, stories about the Mountain of Sustenance. From such a comparative perspective, the authors postulate that the narratives refer to three distinct creations: the establishment of maize as human sustenance par excellence, granting the plant its reproductive capabilities, and establishing its cultivation among humans. Thus, corn is not provided to people directly. It is through the gods of Rain, in the four quarters of the world, that maize seeds are to be administered, its generative powers ensured, and the secrets about its cultivation taught.

This last task recounted in the stories allows us to compare the first part of scene 2.1 in the murals of tomb 1 from Jaltepetongo with the scene of prognostications in the planting and sowing of maize painted in pages 33-34 of codex Tezcatlipoca (Figure 12) (Anders, Jansen, and Pérez Jiménez 1994: 277-280). The graphic similarity between the scene in the murals under consideration and the images in the pages of the screenfold – with a deity behind a seated personification of maize – is remarkable considering that both sources are distanced from each other by at least 700 years. The correspondence between the scene in the tomb's murals and the prognostication for good maize (third from right to left) becomes evident by the identity of the presiding deity: the God of
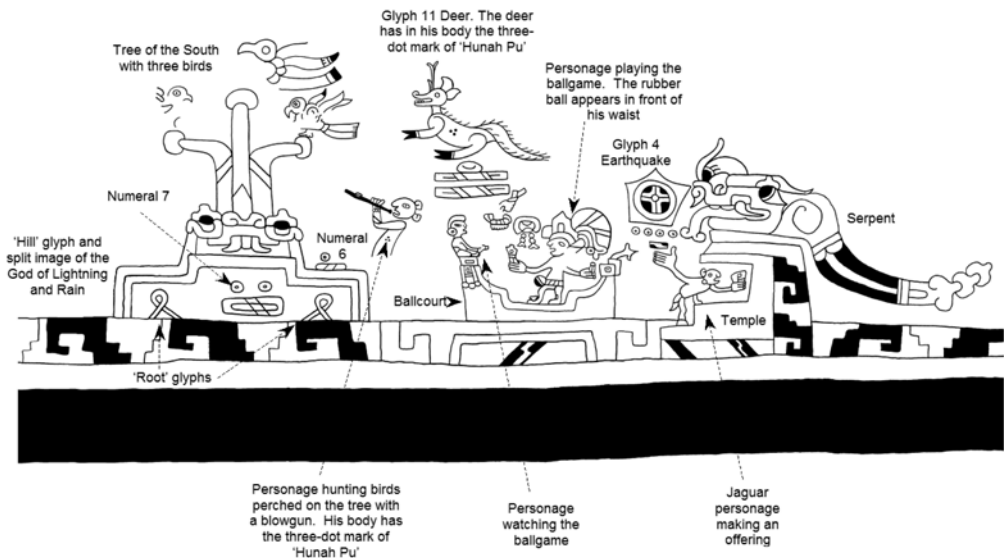
Figure 13. Paintings in panel 2 that include scenes 2.2, 2.3, and 2.4 (the lower register with step frets under the tree is mostly reconstructed).

Rain. However, the comparison does not provide a clue to understand the polysemy of the first part of scene 2.1. The posture of the first three presiding deities in pages 33-34 of the codex is as if carefully tending the maize plant. That of the fourth deity appears more menacing. Based on the posture of the Rain God impersonator painted in the murals, with a foot placed on the back of the personification of maize, it seems as if he is about to decapitate the Young God of maize. Perhaps then the object in his hand renders iconically a long prismatic obsidian blade. The visual metaphor is, of course, the sowing of good and bountiful maize.[14] Perhaps the tasseled object held upside down by the Young God of Maize may allude to the removal of the corn's silk.

Scene 2.2 (Figure 13) centers on the tree of the South, an elaborate representation that, as commented before, includes a 'Hill' sign pedestal, the fruit tree decorated with a chevron and diagonal bands, and at least three birds, one on the left subsidiary branch and two on the right one, that face towards the axis of the composition. Inside the 'Hill' glyph are 'Root' signs at either end. While actually smaller is size in comparison to the other two trees, this one is unique by having the split image of the face of the Rain God (unfolded version of glyph M) placed between the base of the trunk and the top of the supporting platform. Split imagery of the Rain God was deployed in both Zapotec and Ñuiñe style writing, although it was seemingly more common in the later graphic system (Figure 14). Immediately below the unfolded version of glyph M, and framed

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[14] Matadamas (1997: 205 and 2001: 195) interprets the scene as a possible enthronement.
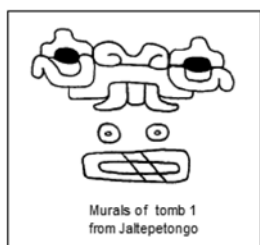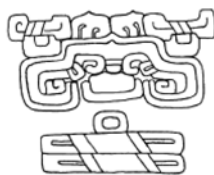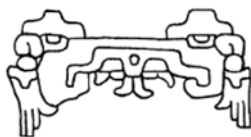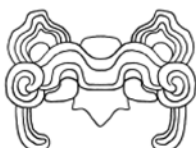
Figure 14. Split, frontal, versions of glyph M in Ñuiñe and Zapotec graphic conventions.

within the 'Hill' glyph, is the rendition of the numeral 7 (a bar and two dots). The spatial relation of the numeral and glyph M suggests that the focus of the narrative in the center of the back wall of the tomb is an apical ancestor named 7 Lightning, a visual syntax that characterizes the narrative programs in other painted tombs in the Central Valleys of Oaxaca and southern Puebla (Urcid 2005).

To the right of the tree is the torso of a personage in the act of hunting with a blowgun the birds perched on its right side. Sections of the murals around the hunter are now completely exfoliated, but the available space before reaching the baseline of the upper

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register in the murals suggests that the personage was originally painted in standing position. In front of where his legs would have been positioned are the seeming remains of a numeral bar and a dot. The length of the bar is unknown, but its center bears the diagonal bands that typically decorate numeral bars. The associated dot is above the bar and to the left of the diagonal bands, suggesting that if these motifs indeed correspond to a numeral, the coefficient was 7. Yet, no calendrical main sign remains extant in the near vicinity. The hunter is shown in profile, and only the left arm is shown, with which he holds the blowgun. The mouth piece of the instrument is well marked, together with a small 'valve' near the tip, perhaps the opening to insert the pellets. The wrist of the hunter seems to have a beaded bracelet, and a diagonal band decorates the forearm near the elbow. While the rendered face is human, the round ears and the placement of one of them towards the posterior apex of the head suggests feline features, an identification supported by the rendering of a Jaguar-Lord in scene 2.4. The other distinct feature of the hunter is the presence of three dots forming a small triangle placed in the upper portion of his torso. This mark and the jaguar ears suggest that the blow gunner conflates well known attributes of Hunah Pu (One Hunter) and Ix Balam Ke (Jaguar Deer), the hero twins in the narrative of the Popol Vuh. Furthermore, the hunting scene in the murals appears to parallel the story when the twins defeat a bird who embodies a false ruler pretending to be the sun (Figure 15). In the story of the Popol Vuh, this pretentious being bears the name of Vuqub Caquix, or 7 Macaw. Notable is the symbolic overlap between the coefficient of the calendrical name of the apical ancestor in the scene (7 Lightning) and that of the calendrical name of the false deity in the narrative of the Popol Vuh (7 Macaw). It should be noted that the large calendrical sign 11 Deer painted above and behind the hunter happens to have the distinctive triangle of dots in the center of the profiled body. One can argue that the repetition of this mark on the hunter and the deer establishes an identity link between the two, but the presence of Hunah Pu's mark on another personage (rendered in 'Panel' 5), opens another interpretative alternative, one in which the calendrical name 11 Deer identifies the main personage painted in the subsequent scene (scene 2.3). While the problem of making sense of the numeral 7 in front of the hunter is hampered by the condition of the murals, one can argue that his identity is given by his own representation and by the seemingly isolated numeral in front of him. Given the attributes of the hunter, his calendrical name could be 7 Lord or 7 Jaguar. The first alternative would be equivalent to the name of one of the senior hero twins in the story of the Popol Vuh (7 Hunter). Although this other mythical personage temporally predates the defeat of 7 Macaw by the junior set of twins, and assuming that the calendrical identity of the hunter in the tomb's murals was indeed 7 Lord, this 'coincidence' could mark another symbolic, timeless, conflation between real personages rendered and named in the murals and mythical beings recounted in the story of creation:
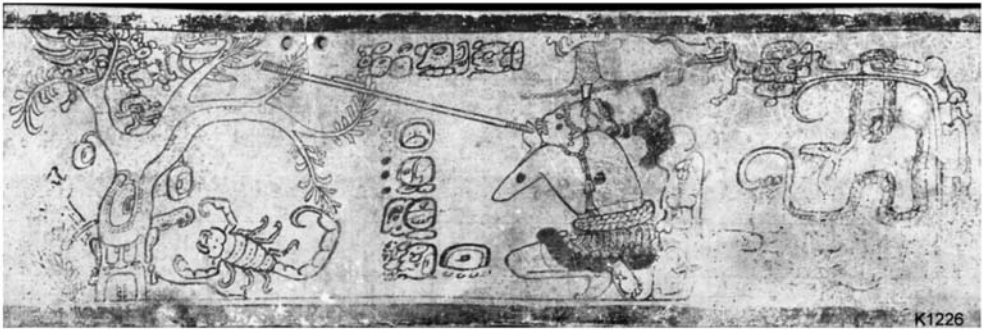
Figure 15. Scenes on Maya polychrome vessels (K1226 and K 4546) depicting the vanquishing of Vucub Caquix and the typical dot marks in the face and torso of Hunah Pu (after Kerr 2005).

7 Lightning as an apical ancestor	= 7 Macaw as the false sun
7 Lord as blow gunner	= 7 Hunter (father of Hunah Pu and Ix Balam Ke)

Scene 2.3 follows to the right (Figure 13). Staged in a ballcourt, the scene includes two personages distinguished by their paraphernalia and posture (Figure 16A). The main protagonist, larger in size and more elaborately dressed, appears standing in the center of the playground. With his arms extended, he is shown holding objects in his hands, while at the same time, the depiction of a waist protector and a rubber ball in front of it denotes the action of playing the ball. According to Matadamas (2005: 400), the peculiarity of rendering the rubber ball half red, half blank (with two lines in between) refers to the dualism of light and shadow, but the evidence or reasoning to support this interpretation is not discussed.[15] The figure wears a royal headband and what appears to be a feathered fan protruding from the back. This element may be a regional variant of

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[15] A large stone replica of a ball found associated to tomb 5 from Cerro de la Campana, Suchilquitongo, displays a similar pattern since half of the stone ball has traces of red pigment.

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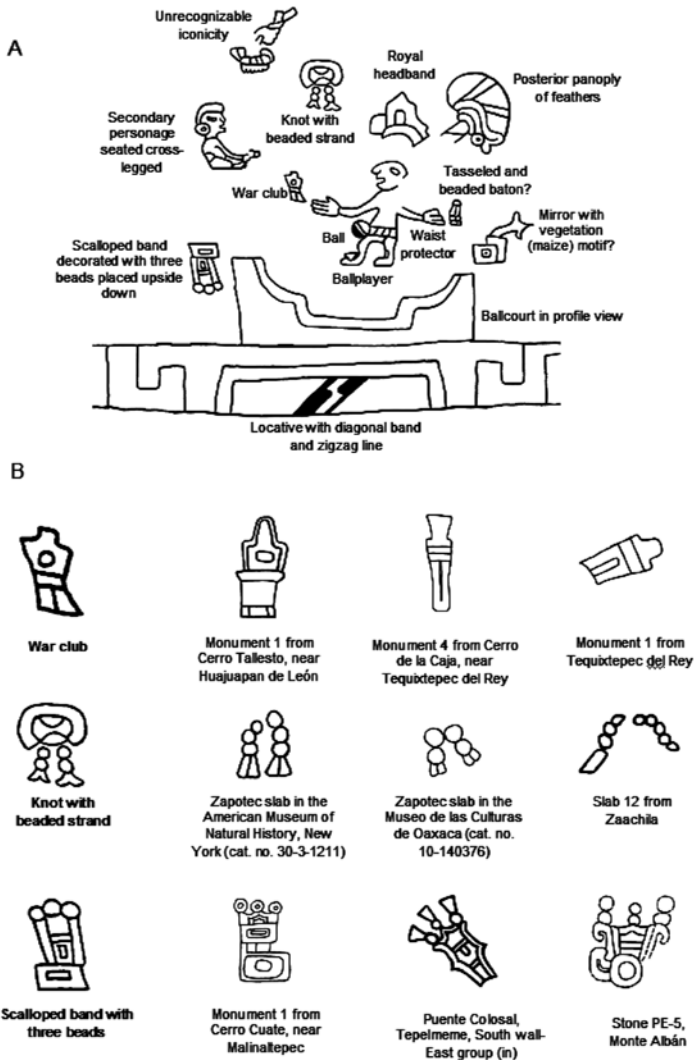
Figure 16. [A] The ballcourt scene glossed; [B] identification of some signs in the scene based on comparative materials.

the feathered panoply worn on the lower back by personages depicted in several media on Zapotec material culture (Figure 17). While the iconicity of the object held in the left hand of the ballplayer looks like a tasseled baton with hanging beads, the one on his right hand may be a war club, an identification based on its similarity with such weapons depicted in several Ñuiñe carved monuments (Figure 16B). Slightly above and in front of the ballplayer's face is the iconic rendition of a knot with two hanging beaded strands.

Figure 17. Zapotec style representations of personages wearing panoply of feathers on their back compared to the main personage in the ballcourt scene of tomb 1 from Jaltepetongo.

This object is similar to beaded strands held by ancestral figures in Zapotec genealogical slabs, a material symbol that seemingly denotes the trans-generational transfer of rights and privileges (Urcid 2003) (Figure 16B).[16] Immediately to the left of this sign is another one, but its iconicity is unrecognizable due to the exfoliated condition of the murals. As commented before, the syntagmatic relations in scenes 2.2 and 2.3 strongly suggest that the glyph 11 Deer renders the identity of the ballplayer.

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[16] For other examples of beaded strands in the graphic systems of Oaxaca and other parts of Mesoamerica see Urcid 2005: fig. 6.9.

The secondary personage in the ballcourt scene is smaller in size and appears seated cross-legged over the left platform of the court (Figure 16A). The figure wears an ear-flare and a loincloth, as can be deduced by the seeming representation of the waistband between his torso and the folding of the leg. Only the right arm is shown, extended frontally but relaxed so as to leave the hand just above the plantar view of the left foot. It is unclear if the personage holds something in his hand. While this second personage may be the prisoner who is about to be sacrificed after the ballgame, it could be just as well an attendant like those shown in panel 3 from the south ballcourt at El Tajín (cf. Kampen 1972: Catalogue, Figure Number 22). What is evident is that he was not identified by means of his calendrical name.[17]

The ballcourt is depicted in profile view along its perpendicular axis, and signs were rendered on the side platforms. The glyph on the left platform, the one upon which the secondary personage seats, is a scalloped band decorated with three beads. The sign, rendered upside down, is common in Ñuiñe inscriptions and seemingly rare in the Zapotec corpus (Figure 16B). It's known epigraphic contexts suggest that it is a mark of nobility. Yet, its reversed position in the ballcourt may be the only hint that the secondary personage is indeed a high-ranking prisoner about to be sacrificed. The motif painted over the platform on the right side of the ballcourt appears to be a glyphic compound that includes glyph Eta and a plant motif, perhaps maize. Glyph Eta is common to both Zapotec and Ñuiñe writing (Figure 18A). I have suggested elsewhere (Urcid 2001: 233) that its iconicity may be that of a mirror. If so, the compound may be a reference to divination, and the maize plant may signal the purpose of divination to forecast agricultural productivity through the offering of sacrificial victims.[18] The basal register of the mural, which generally includes step fret designs, was rendered quite differently in the section under the ballcourt. Here, a rectangular frame with squared scrolls at either side was painted, rendering a blank zigzagged thick line within a red diagonal band. These graphic elements resemble those conforming 'Hill' signs in both the Ñuiñe and Zapotec scribal traditions, indicating that their value is to signal a specific locality (Figure 18B).

The next scene in panel 2 (scene 2.4) unfolds within a temple (Figure 13). The protagonist is shown as if entering it, with one foot in the basal step and the other one on the floor of the temple's enclosure. Although the face, hands, and feet are show with human anatomical features, the rounded ear in the posterior apex of the head suggests that the personage is partly disguised as a jaguar. The flap of a loincloth, decorated with a horizontal line band at the bottom end, protrudes under the back of the figure. The extended

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[17] Part of the stucco in front of this secondary personage fell off, but the area appears to be too small to have had a calendrical sign painted there (cf. Matadamas 2005: plate 27.7).

[18] This interpretation is supported by scenes of darting sacrifice, for example in codex Iya Cochi (page 10) and Tonindeye (page 83-84), that render a mirror at the base of the scaffold upon which the sacrificial victim is tied, with the ensuing blood from the wounds dripping unto the mirrors.
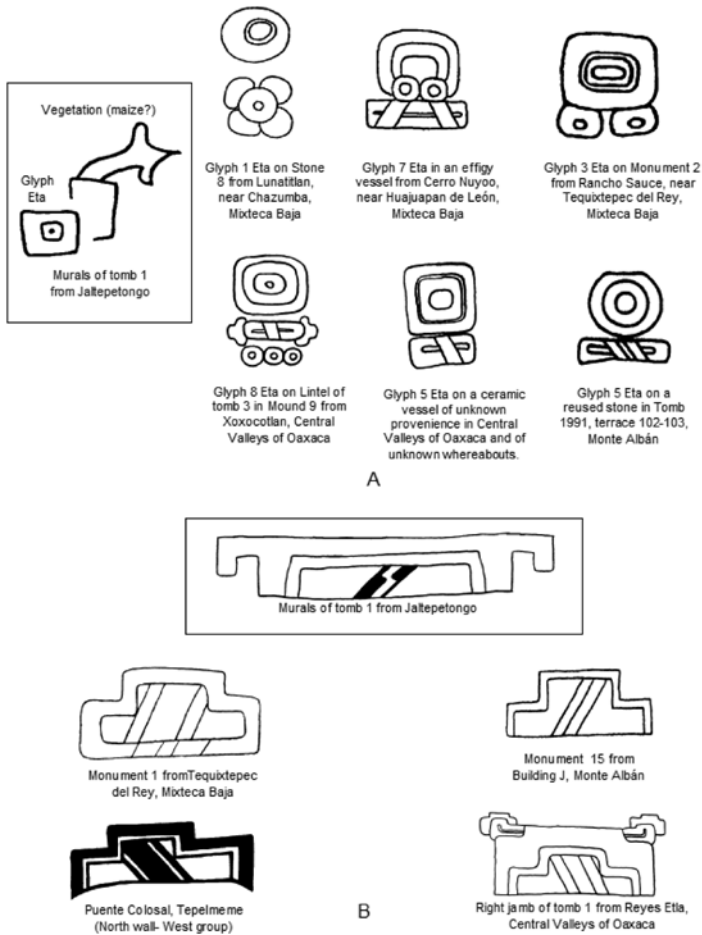
Figure 18. [A] Glyph Eta in Zapotec and Ñuiñe inscriptions; [B] Hill signs with diagonal lines in Zapotec and Ñuiñe inscriptions compared to the sign under the ballcourt scene in tomb 1 from Jaltepetongo.

posture of the arms is similar to that of the ballplayer, yet only his left hand holds an object. However, its iconicity is unknown, although Matadamas (2005: 401) suggests that is resembles a vessel containing a foamy liquid. The right hand, on the other hand, seemingly directs the attention to a small bar painted slightly above it and decorated with a diagonal zigzagged band identical to the one painted in the basal register under the ballcourt (although reversed) and to one of the diagonal bands at the base of the temple. Above this motif is the glyph 4 Earthquake (4E), with the E sign inset within a plain version of the 'scalloped band' glyph. The syntagmatic relation between the day sign and the personage indicates that the glyph is his calendrical name.

The temple, seen in profile view, has a flat roof and a double cornice with opposing slanted surfaces on top. The base of the temple is a rectangle decorated with two diagonal bands, the one on the left side painted red and the one on the right side decorated with a blank zigzagged line. The back wall of the temple sports two step-fret designs in vertical sequence, a decoration that from hereon rotates 90 degrees counterclockwise and continues as the top basal register of the murals along the entire length of the west and northwest walls. Over the temple, and as if sliding sinuously, appears a full-bodied serpent shown in profile view. The head of the ophidian rests on top of the temple's double cornice, with the tongue sticking out and hanging in front of the facade of the building. The serpent exposes the fangs and has a curl over the upper jaw topped in front by a tasseled ornament. Although much of the painted stucco in the area of the serpent's body is now exfoliated, enough remains to determine the presence of two longitudinal red bands framing a blank one in the center, the three of them running along the length of the body until reaching two perpendicular bands. These bands define the beginning of the tail, which ends in three rattles. Matadamas has proposed that the serpent signals the name of a locality, linking it vaguely (1977: 204 and 2001: 192) with Coixtlahuaca since the toponym of this place is rendered in several Lienzos as an entwined double serpent. The nominative function of the serpent appears undeniable, but it may as well mark the name of the temple (and hence its function) rather than the name of a settlement.[19]

Scene 2.5 is to the right of the Temple-Serpent, and covers the south end of the west wall (Figure 19). It includes in the lower portion a personage lying fully extended in supine position with a second individual painted as if seated over his legs. However, this graphic recourse appears to be the solution for rendering individuals actually placed perpendicular to one another in the same profiled plane without deploying the visual effect of overlapped views (Figure 20). Version A in Figure 20 is the one used by the painter of the murals, a solution apparently dictated by the need to integrate the profile views of both personages to the rest of the visual narrative. Version B shows both personages on the same ground line but perpendicular to one another. Only the seated personage is in profile view, which would have made difficult integrating the scene to the rest of the narrative. Version C shows both personages in profile view on the same ground line, resorting to overlapped planes. As can be observed, this alternative obscures the nature of the scene.

The fact that the supine individual was rendered without arms, with eyes closed and open mouth indicates that it is an enshrouded cadaver, similar to other known representations of supine or seated mortuary bundles (Figure 21). The torso and upper legs appear

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[19] Scene 2.4 resembles the four images in the lower section of pages 33-34 of codex Tezcatlipoca, where personages present an offering in specific temples for specific deity images. Anders, Jansen and Pérez Jiménez (1994: 273-276) interpret these scenes as prognostications in ceremonial enactments during different times of the year. It may be that the ritual offering in the Temple-Serpent depicted in the murals, was to prognosticate the outcome of the ballgame shown in the previous scene.
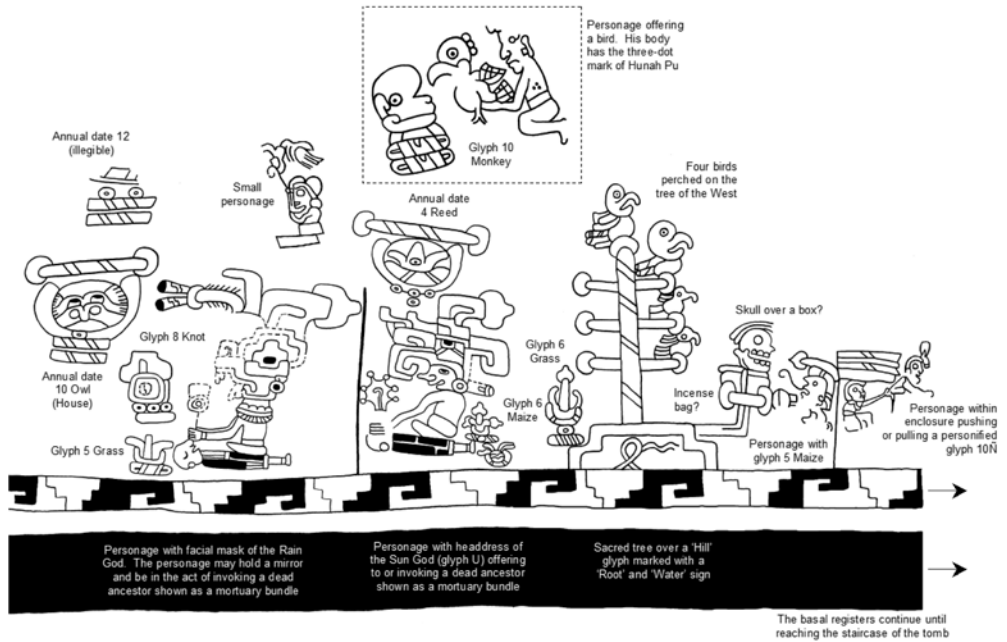
Figure 19. Part of panel 2 (scene 2.5), Panel 3 (scenes 3.1 and 3.2), part of Panel 4 (scene 4.1), and 'Panel' 5 painted along the west wall of tomb 1 from Jaltepetongo.

to be covered by a woven mantle with a quadripartite design that alternates paired partitions of red painted areas and squares marked by horizontal lines. The body still wears earflares and seemingly footgear or anklets. The seated personage facing the mortuary bundle is clad with a prominent mask of the Rain God, a short tasseled cape that covers the shoulders, and a loincloth, although only the waistband was rendered. Except for the posture of the hands, the painted seated figure has close three-dimensional counterparts in ceramic effigy vessels from the Mixteca Alta (Figure 22). Although the figure in the murals is in profile view, the painter marked double lines to indicate the overlapped view of both arms, representing a banded bracelet on the left wrist only. A good portion of the painted stucco encompassing the front of the figure is now exfoliated, and although the configuration of the Rain God mask can be reconstructed with much certainty, the identification of the object in his hands cannot be fully ascertained.[20] What remains of the object includes a stick on top of which is an incomplete configuration resembling glyph Eta, that is, the possible iconic rendition of a mirror. The two vertically arranged

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[20] One may assume that the Rain God impersonator sported a glyph C in the forehead, a deduction based on the protruding stripe that ends in a bead and two tassels. This motif is at times an attribute of glyph C in both Zapotec and Ñuiñe scribal practices (Figure 11B, example at the far right), and is frequently present in personifications of the Rain God (as in the effigy vessel shown in Figure 22).
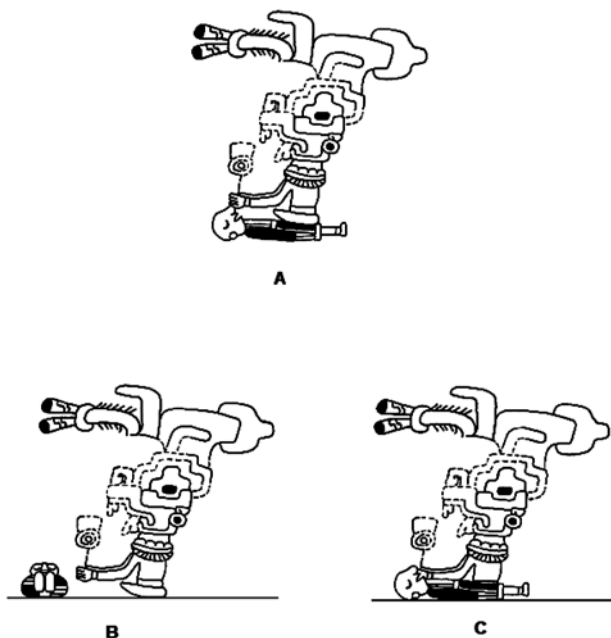
Figure 20. Three graphic solutions to render the personages in scene 2.5 of tomb 1 from Jaltepetongo.

day signs painted to the left of both personages undoubtedly identify them by their calendrical appellatives. The size and relative position of the glyphs, which mimic those of the figures, clearly indicates who is who. The name of the enshrouded person was 5 Reed (5 D), and that of the Rain God impersonator was 8 Knot (8A). Smudged red pigment in a small area above the legs of the mortuary bundle and behind the seated figure impersonating the Rain God suggest the former presence of a glyph now illegible. Considering the proposed iconographic interpretations, the scene may depict a ritual whereby a mortal impersonating the Rain deity engages in divination while invoking a deceased ancestor.

Scene 2.5 also covers a portion of the roof's vault above the personages just described (Figure 19). To the left are two glyphs almost in vertical arrangement. The upper most sign is much exfoliated, but enough remains to identify a year glyph (the synecdoche of a royal headband) at the top, followed by the lower border of a cartouche that must have had a year bearer sign, and the numeral 12 below. While this annual date is illegible, the one below remains intact. The glyphic compound marking this other date includes the year sign above, the cartouche with the glyph Owl (F), and the numeral 11, with the dot of the coefficient placed over the lower border of the cartouche containing the year bearer. To the right of the two annual dates and above the seated impersonator of the Rain God, is the rendition of another but much smaller seated and apparently crosslegged human figure. The personage seats on the right side of a plain rectangle. It appears to have both arm flexed towards the face, with a scrolls coming out of the mouth.
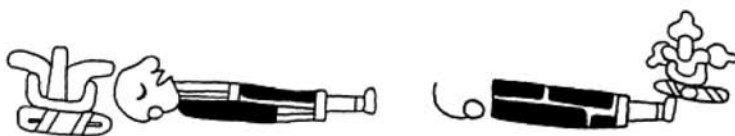
Mortuary bundles identified by the calendrical names 5 Grass and 6 Maize in the murals of tomb 1 from Jaltepetongo, Oaxaca

Mortuary bundle on a base identified by the calendrical name 11 Rain in the paintings from Puente Colosal, Tepelmeme, Oaxaca
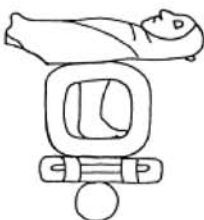
Mortuary bundle identified by the calendrical name 6 Jaguar (glyph 'Leg'), Monument 20 from Xochicalco, Morelos (after Garza Tarazona 1996: 17)

Mortuary bundle identified by the calendrical name 13 Monkey placed inside a box, stela in tomb 5 from Cerro de la Campana, Suchilquitongo, Oaxaca

Mortuary bundle inside a box (highlighted in black) accompanied by two calendrical names (7 Fire Serpent [glyph S] and 3 Jaguar), stela 1 from Río Grande, coastal Oaxaca

Mortuary bundle identified by the calendrical name 11 Skull placed inside a box, codex Tonindeye, p. 20, Oaxaca

Mortuary bundle accompanied by offerings, codex Magliabechiano, p. 60, Central Highlands

Figure 21. Depiction of mortuary bundles from several parts of Mesoamerica.
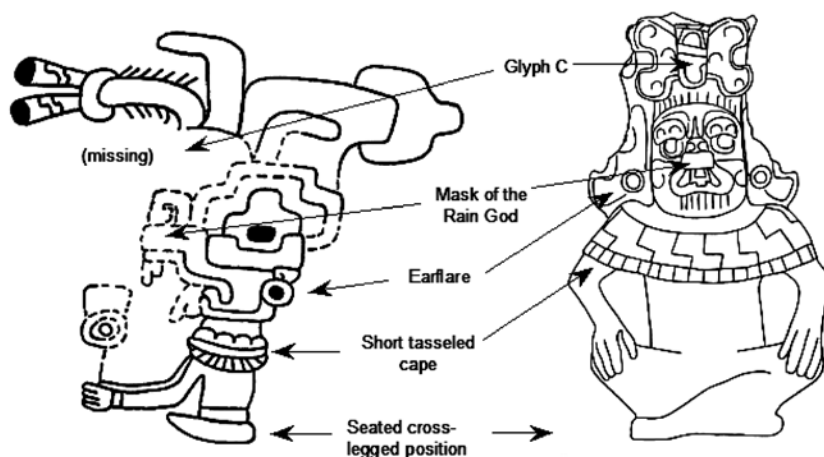
Figure 22. Rain God impersonator in scene 2.5 of tomb 1 from Jaltepetongo compared to a Late Formative effigy vessel of a Rain God impersonator from Huamelulpan, Mixteca Alta.

The speech scroll is topped by two motifs resembling the iconic rendition of corn cobs caped by the trefoil ends that signal budding maize.

Panel 3

This panel covers part of the west wall and includes two scenes (3.1 and 3.2) (Figure 19). Although panels 2 and 3 are clearly distinguished by a vertical line, the direction of the personages in scene 3.1 and the rendered theme suggest that it is a continuation of scene 2.5. The vignette includes in the lower portion another mortuary bundle and a personage seated next to it. The cadaver is also in fully extended supine position and shrouded in a textile divided into four squares that were fully painted in red. Touching his feet is the glyph 6 Maize (6 J) and the noncalendrical version of glyph Z (Water). This sign, a circle with double undulating set of lines inside, appears partially encased by a cartouche and topped by feathers. Both signs undoubtedly provide the calendrical and personal names of the dead person. The numeral of the Maize glyph conflates the dot onto the bar, a graphic convention attested in Ñuiñe and Zapotec inscriptions. The profile view of the seated personage includes only the left arm, which is extended so as to place the hand over the face of the mortuary bundle. Immediately above the hand is the 'Spiral' glyph, a sign in the repertoire of both the Ñuiñe and Zapotec scripts whose iconicity may be that of a whirlpool or a conch shell cut in half (Figure 23). The semantic value of the sign may be related to notions about generative powers and genealogical succession. It may be that this other scene depicts another ritual of divination involving the invocation of the deceased ancestor with the specific intent of petitioning for the continuation of the lineage.
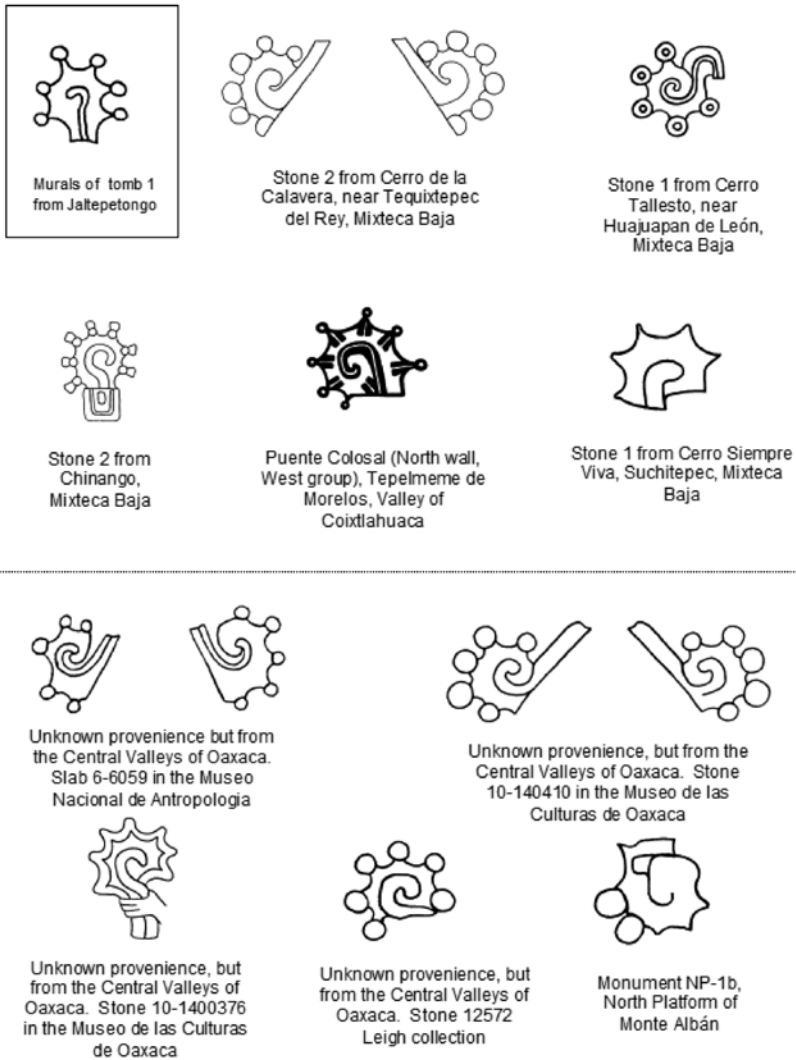
Figure 23. The 'Spiral' glyph in Ñuiñe and Zapotec style writing.

The seated personage is shown with the waistband of a loincloth, wears an earflare, and sports a large headdress with the imagery of glyph U, a pervasive sign in Ñuiñe and Zapotec scribal traditions (Figure 24A). Epigraphic and linguistic evidence from the Central Valleys of Oaxaca substantiate the interpretation of sign U as the symbolic rendition of the Zapotec paramount deity *Pitáo Cozáana* (Sellen 2002: 194-201; Urcid 2005: 53-54), a divinity addressed by epithets that seemingly linked it to the Sun (Smith Stark 2002: 95-110). I have demonstrated elsewhere (Urcid 2005: 53-54, and figure
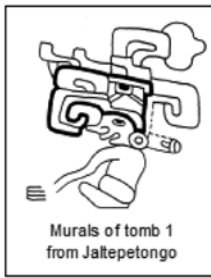
An Ancient Story of Creation from San Pedro Jaltepetongo

Figure 24. [A] Examples of noncalendrical versions of glyph U as headdress in Ñuiñe and Zapotec inscriptions; [B] T-shape arrangement of numeral dots in Ñuiñe inscriptions.

4.6) that the symbolic rendition of *Pitáo Cozáana* has its counterpart in what Mayanists call 'Principal Bird Deity', that is, the graphic allusion to the 'false Sun' embodied by 7 Macaw in the narrative of the Popol Vuh. The large glyph 6 Grass (6 N) painted behind the seated personage and beyond the calendrical and personal names of the enshrouded dead person, must be his calendrical name.

Scene 3.1 also includes higher on the west wall, immediately above the seated personage, the annual date 4 Reed (4 D). The glyphic compound that forms the date includes at the top the year sign (synecdoche of a royal headband), followed by a cartouche with the year bearer Reed and by three dots arranged in an angle. Given the overriding symmetry in Ñuiñe and Zapotec graphic conventions, and considering that a fragment of painted stucco to the left of the three dots is now missing, the numeral of the annual date must be 4. The resulting T-shaped arrangement of the dots has been attested in other Ñuiñe calendrical inscriptions, as well as the partial overlap of the three upper dots onto the lower border of the bearer's cartouche (Figure 24B). Slightly above and to the right of the annual date was another discrete painting, but only a blurred and indistinct area of red pigment remains.

The imagery in scene 3.2, in contrast to the previous one, is oriented so as to conform to scene 4.1 in panel 4 (Figure 19). It includes the tree of the West with four birds perched on its branches facing towards the entrance of the tomb. At the base of the tree and inside the supporting 'Hill' sign is a single 'Root' glyph, followed on the right side by two undulating parallel lines. This graphic convention signals 'Water' in both Zapotec and Ñuiñe scribal practices. A human skull seemingly placed over a box is depicted to the right of the tree. Immediately below the box is an incense bag. The skull faces a human figure who wears as headdress a synecdoche of glyph J. The hair of the figure is substituted by a bent numeral bar, rendering its calendrical name as 5 Maize (5 J). The figure has a speech scroll directed towards the skull. The obliteration below the head of this small personage prevents from determining the posture of its body and its garments, but given the available space, and assuming that the figure was full bodied, its posture was probably seated in cross-legged fashion.

This scene appears to corresponds to a passage in the Popol Vuh, when the gods of the underworld sacrifice the first sets of twins Hun Hunah Pu and 7 Hunah Pu. Afterwards, the decapitated head of Hun Hunah Pu is placed by the victorious underworld lords on a calabash tree. Once the head becomes skeletonized, the young daughter of one of the gods of the underworld visits the tree, whereby Hun Hunah Pu impregnates her by spitting onto her hand. This female protagonist, named Woman-Blood, becomes the mother of the second hero twins in the narrative: Hunah Pu and Ix Balam Ke (Tedlock 1985: 113-115). By implication then, the personage speaking to the human skull in scene 3.2 is a deified female. The decapitation of Hun Hunah Pu occurs at the Place of Sacrifice in the Ballcourt, with the calabash tree being nearby. According to the narrative in the Popol Vuh these places are in the west end of the underworld (Tedlock 1985: 38), a cardinal direction that matches the position of the scene within the orientation of the tomb.

Panel 4

This panel encompasses the northernmost end of the west wall and the western half of the north wall (Figure 19). Once scene (number 4.1) survives, although as commented in note 9, faint traces of the tree of the North with a bird perched on it are said to remain on the northwest wall (Matadamas 2005: 408). Scene 4.1 includes the rendition of two personages facing towards the entrance of the tomb. One is painted as if inside an enclosure, probably a temple. The structure, in profile view, has two double cornices with the upper sections marked by diagonal bands, as if conflating two numeral bars onto the facade of the building. The personage inside appears to be seated and cross-legged, with an arm extended upwards as if pushing out or puling in another figure painted in front and slightly higher. This second personage is also in profile, in cross-legged seated position but with the torso propped forward and a hand extended so as to rest on a surface. This second figure has a prominent knot in the forehead. While Matadamas (2005: 409 [l]) reads this figure as a personalized glyph Ñ unaccompanied by a numeral, it seems possible that the bars conflated to the cornices of the small temple, placed immediately to the left of the figure, render his complete calendrical name as 10Ñ. I have argued in a previous study (Urcid 2001: 188-193 and 245-247) that glyph Ñ corresponds to the fourth position in the Zapotec and Ñuiñe glyphic day lists. I have also elaborated in a subsequent essay (Urcid 2005: 49-66) that the iconicity of the glyph is related to priestly roles associated to the cult of the Fire-Serpent, an office closely linked in turn to the prerogatives of paramount sacrificers in their duties as rainmakers. When compared to Zapotec and Ñuiñe examples of glyph Ñ (Figure 25), the exemplar from the murals in the tomb omits several defining features such as a bucal mask, the frontally tied hair (except for the knot), and the scrolls in the eyes, but the glyph falls within the known range of variation for the sign.

Panel 5

This 'panel' is actually a small discrete painted scene that, although not defined by any boundaries, was added at a later time. It was rendered above the first scene in panel 3, over the vaulted roof of the tomb (Figure 19). The scene includes a seated personage in profile view with legs bent under the torso (although only the left one is shown), holding with the left hand (the only one shown) a bird as if offering it to another personage. The latter, however, is simply identified by its calendrical name 10 Monkey (10 O). Yet, the facing direction of the Monkey glyph clearly evinces the dyadic interaction between the personages. The gender of the seated figure as male is denoted by the waistband of a loincloth, but the glyphic substitution for the second personage does not allow ascertaining if it was female or male. The seated personage seemingly wears a headdress, but most if it is now exfoliated and thus its configuration is unknown. The figure has a tubular earring passing through the earlobe and the triangle of three dots, the typical mark of Hunah Pu, placed in the torso.

Figure 25. Glyph Ñ in Zapotec and Ñuiñe graphic conventions.

The Chronological framework of the narrative

As previously described, the adjacent scenes 2.5 and 3.1 on the west wall of the tomb have respectively two and one annual dates, although only two of these dates have legible bearers (11 Owl in scene 2.5 and 4 Reed in scene 3.1) (Figure 26). Although the iconicity of the year signs in both the Ñuiñe and Zapotec scribal traditions is that of a royal headband, the versions in the murals are closer to Ñuiñe than to Zapotec conventions (Figure 27). The Ñuiñe year sign includes at times the headband topped by a triangular folding or an interlaced motif, a configuration that in the graphic systems of the Central Highlands is known as 'Trapeze-Ray'. Yet, the year sign in the murals of tomb 1 from Jaltepetongo differ from other Ñuiñe royal headbands by the fact that they only render, by recourse to synecdoche, the frontal view of the headband and the round caps at either end that represent the posterior knots. The headband itself is marked with pairs of diagonal bands. It is evident that the use of this abbreviated version of the year sign continued being used in northwestern Oaxaca well into the early colonial period. For instance, codex Baranda (a 16th century document from the nearby valley of Coixtlahuaca) follows the same convention to represent the year sign.

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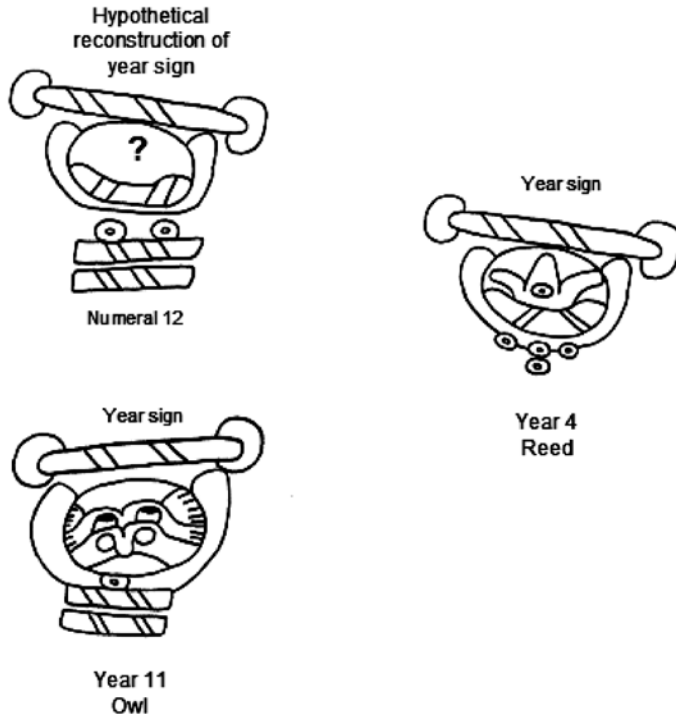
Figure 26. The three annual dates in the murals of the tomb, with the missing year glyph graphically reconstructed.

I have demonstrated in a previous study (Urcid 2001: 170-174) that the Owl sign corresponds to the 3rd position in the Zapotec and Ñuiñe glyphic day lists and is therefore equivalent to the pictography of a House. The link between the two seems to be based on the notion of 'darkness' that a windowless house and a nocturnal bird seem to imply by metonymy. Considering such an equivalence, the House (Owl) and Reed signs correspond to a type III Calendar Round system, that is, one based on bearers occupying positions 3 (House) – 8 (Rabbit) – 13 (Reed) – 18 (Flint knife) in the 20 day list of the ancient calendar. This type of bearers is well documented in other inscriptions from northwestern Oaxaca, but not in the Central Valleys of Oaxaca prior to the political demise of Monte Albán (Figure 28). The ancient Zapotec Calendar Round in vogue at the time tomb 1 from Jaltepetongo was painted was characterized by set II year bearers, a system whereby years were named with the day names Lightning (2), Deer (7), Grass (12), and Earthquake (17) (Caso 1928, Urcid 2001). Although the year bearers in the Calendar Round reckoned in ancient Jaltepetongo correspond to set III, at least the known rendition of two of them follow the Zapotec and Ñuiñe style conventions (glyphs F [Owl] and D [Reed]) rather than the graphic usage of the Tetla-Mixteca and Nahuatl
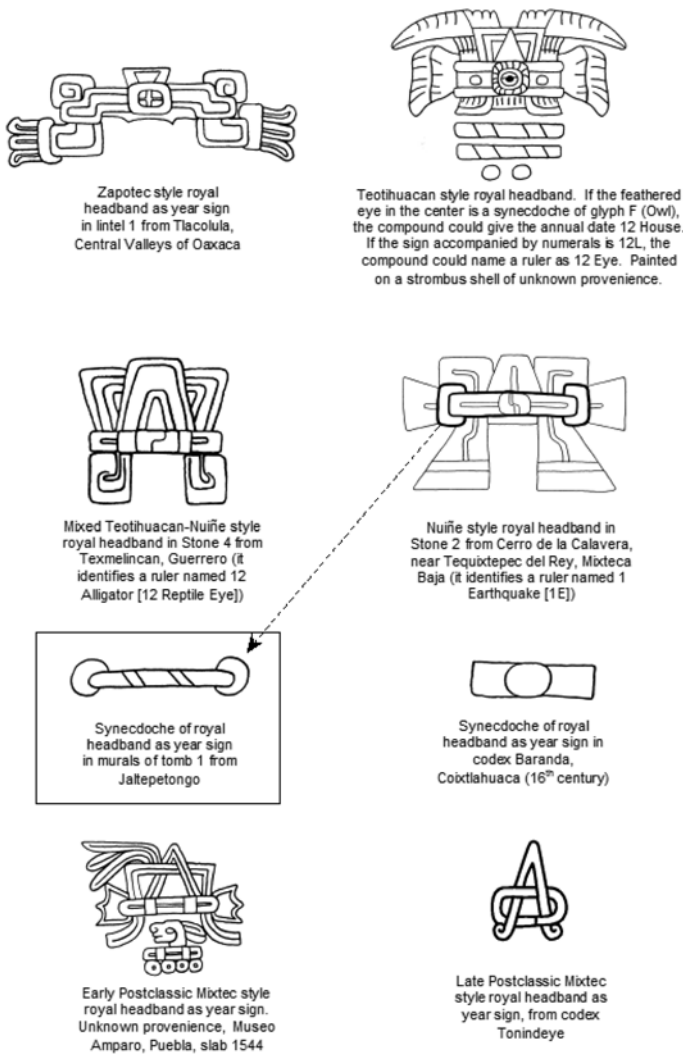
Figure 27. The Royal headband glyph as marker of rulership or as year sign in Southwestern Mesoamerica and the Central Highlands.

styles of the Postclassic (glyphs House and Arrow).

If one assumes that the three annual dates in the murals provide a continuous time reckoning, that is, that the calendrical count does not include the intercalation of dates pertaining to discontinuous 52 year cycles, it is possible to propose several alternative readings of their sequence and therefore the identification of the now illegible third date. Since there are three annual dates, one can generate six possible linear permutations and their continuous time spans (see Table 2 and Appendix 1).
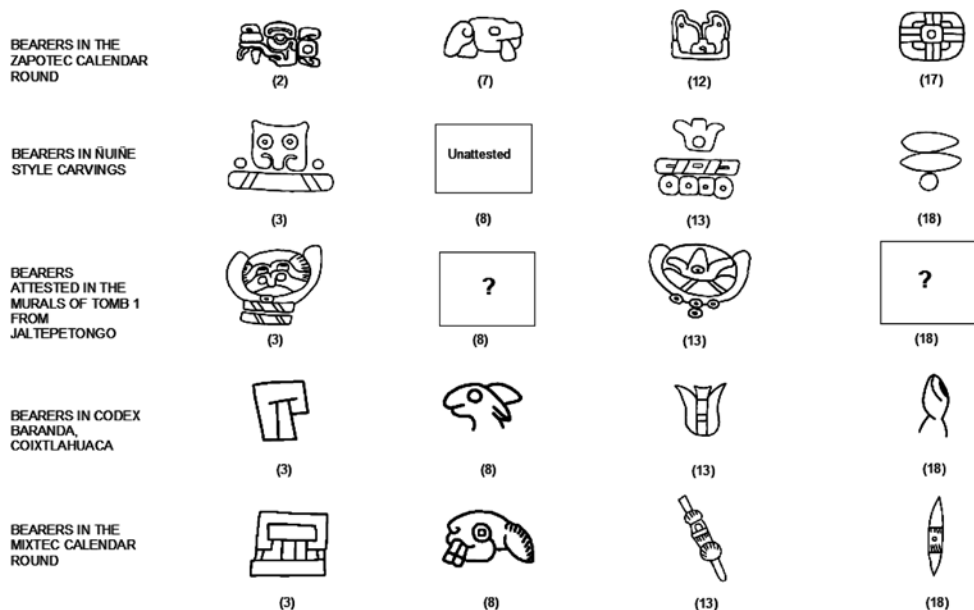
Figure 28. Sets of year bearers in ancient calendars from Southwestern Mesoamerica.

There is no reason to assume, particularly given the incomplete nature of the paintings, that only three annual dates made up the chronological framework of the narrative. Yet, in order to discuss the implications of the sequences outlined in Table 2 it is necessary to take into account the structure of the narrative. As previously discussed, the focal point of the narrative is centered on panel 2, and specifically in scene 2.2 where the apical ancestor 7 Lightning is rendered at the base of the tree of the South. One may assume that the rest of the named personages figured in panel 2 are descendants from this founder, implying a genealogical sequence that proceeds on both sides from the center of the back wall of the tomb towards its entrance. On the other hand it was noted that, in terms of the narrative in the Popol Vuh, the vignette rendered in the second scene of panel 3 (5 Maize speaking to the human skull) predates the focal scene (2.2) where 7 Lord hunts down birds with his blowgun. Consequently, it appears that the reading sequence of the narrative alternates from panel 4, to panel 1, to panel 3, to panel 2. Such a reading sequence would support the first sequence glossed in Table 2 (no. 1a), that is, the series 4 Reed → 12 Flint knife → 11 House. This alternative makes the reading of the annual dates from right to left (North to South) and from top to bottom. Given the funerary character and genealogical content of the narrative, the span of time generated by this sequence (47 years) and its intervals of 22 and 25 years also appear reasonable, particularly if one takes into account that in the Postclassic screenfolds from the Mixteca Alta, the average inter-generational span is 25 years. An interesting detail is that the annual dates occur only in scenes 3.1 and 2.5, as if the earlier part of the genealogy is

Table 2. Possible sequences in the three annual dates painted on the tomb's murals.

Sequence	Span	Obliterated date	Intervals
1.a 4D – 12? – 11F	47 years	12 Flint knife	22 – 25
1.b		12 Reed	9 – 38
1.c		12 House	13 – 34
2. 12? – 11F – 4D	20 years	12 House	13 – 7
3. 11F – 12? – 4D	7 years	12 Rabbit	1 – 6
4. 11F – 4D – 12?	15 years	12 Reed	7 – 8
5. 12? – 4D – 1F	51 years	12 Rabbit	5 – 46
6. 4D – 11F – 12?	48 years	12 Rabbit	47 – 1

situated in the timeless past. The suggested sequence of annual dates and the concomitant reconstruction of the missing year bearer would place the later part of the genealogy in historical time.[21]

Yet, whereas the date 4 Reed in panel 3 refers to an earlier event than the ones marked by the dates 12 Flint (missing) and 11 House (Owl) in scene 2.5, the associated vignettes seemingly proceed in a reversed order. To account for this apparent contradictory interpretation, it may be convenient to determine what the annual dates commemorate. The theme of the vignettes suggests that they provide the dates when Lord 6 Maize died and was invoked in a divination ritual (Year 4 Reed), and when Lord 5 Grass passed away, being also invoked in a divinatory ritual (Year 12 Flint). The annual date 11 House would thus date the demise of the lord who commissioned the paintings and was last buried in the tomb. His identity may have been omitted, unless he was Lord 10 Monkey, that is, the ancestor to whom an offering of a bird is being made in 'panel' 5. Consequently, the temporal reversal of scenes 2.5 and 3.1 may have been a strategy on the part of Lord 10 Monkey to situate his immediate predecessor (Lord 5 Grass) closer to the founding ancestor.

Discussion and Conclusion

The arguments so far presented strengthen the assumption that the reading sequence of the narrative is not linear, but alternates and has temporal relays that recounts events back and forth in certain sections of the murals. The narrative consists, like in the Quiche account of the Popol Vuh and the accounts in many pre-Hispanic and early colonial screenfolds and *lienzos*, of a mythical, primordial time, followed by events in historical time. Some of the

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[21] While the first alternative in Table 2 suggests that the now obliterated annual date was 12 Flint, Matadamas (2005: 401 and 408-409) considers that the bearer could have been F (Owl) or T (Rabbit) without explaining why.

members of the lineage rendered in the narrative, or at least the most recent ones named in the genealogical sequence, were probably buried in the tomb. The genealogical sequence, taking into account the inferred progression between panels and the seeming temporal reversal in scenes 2.5 and 3.1, would have been as shown in Table 3.

The ordering presented in Table 3 discloses seeming patterns. Two of the calendrical names in mythical times include the numeral 10. So do three of the names in historic times. Within this portion of the genealogy there are two repetitions of the numeral 6 and two of the numeral 7. There is only one instance in which a personage named 5 Maize is repeated in both mythical and historical times. Yet, that this cannot be another example of temporal relay involving scenes 3.2 and 2.1 is suggested by the inferred gender of the personages. It may be recalled that the figure in scene 3.2, because of its parallelism with the passage in the Popol Vuh in which 'Woman-Blood' speaks to the skeletonized skull of Hun Hunah Pu, is assumed to be a female, while the loincloth of the figure in scene 2.1 denotes a male.

Another seeming pattern in Table 3 is that there are 13 calendrical names within historic times. Whether this was an attempt to accommodate a genealogical record in terms of a significant cycle in the mantic calendar (the *trecena*) cannot be demonstrated. Ultimately, none of the mentioned repetitions may be significant because after all, the murals are incomplete, opening the possibility that other named personages became obliterated.

On the other hand none of the available calendrical names correspond to the names of deities featured in the story of creation recounted in the Popol Vuh. They do not correspond either to the primordial beings mentioned in the pre-Hispanic screenfolds from the Mixteca Alta or the Lienzos from the Coixtlahuaca valley (Caso 1977: 49-68). Such a lack of correspondence suggests that the members of a powerful lineage based some 1,200 years ago in ancient Jaltepetongo meshed their particular humanness within a generalized mythical paradigm that was interpreted locally in order to legitimize their privileged social standing. However, aside from a general sequence from the apical ancestor (7 Lightning) to ego (10 Monkey), it is impossible to establish the particular kinship relations linking the succession of mortals named in the genealogy.

The quadripartite structure of the narrative and its associated trees, birds, deities, and cardinal directions, add further differences to variability already noted in a number of Mesoamerican cosmograms, including those in codices Tezcatlipoca, Colombino (pages III, IV, and XVII), and Tudela (pages 97, 104, 111, and 118) (Anders, Jansen, and Pérez Jiménez 1994: 163). Using as an example the cosmogram on page 1 of codex Tezcatlipoca and its cardinal correspondence with the painted narrative in tomb 1 from Jaltepetongo (Figure 6), differences or possible correspondences in the trees, birds, and deities can be highlighted (see Table 4). It should be noted that although the trees in the murals are rendered differently, Matadamas argues that they depict the same species. The birds in the murals, on the other hand, differ in each tree but their specific identification is problematic. What is unique to them is their number, as the East tree has one, the

West tree has 4, and the South tree has 3.

Despite the differences, general themes in the narrative match conceptions about the cosmos among present day Totonacs (Ichon 1973: 46, cited in Anders, Jansen, and Pérez Jiménez 1994: 168) since scene 2.1 painted on the east wall entails abundant rain and the sowing of maize, and scenes 2.5 and 3.1 painted on the west wall allude to dead ancestors.

Regarding the meaning of the bands upon which the narrative was painted, it is no coincidence that the basal one was rendered in a dark blue color. Given the themes on the murals one may argue that the intent was to make a graphic allusion to the primordial sea mentioned in the Popol Vuh. Prior to the several attempts by the Gods to create true human beings, and before anything existed, including the earth and the sky, the world was a calm, motionless body of water. The step-fret designs on the third band in the murals can be also related to notions of water, places of emergence, and ancestors, links that can be substantiated by considering the etymology of the Nahuatl term

Table 3. Presumed genealogical sequence in the narrative of tomb 1 from Jaltepetongo.[22]

MYTHICAL TIME			
Panel 4, scene 4.1			
-	Deity (?) being pushed out of a temple	10	Fire Serpent
Panel 1			
-	Deity (?) obliterated or named on the east wall	10	Earthquake
Panel 3, scene 3.2			
-	Deity (?) speaking to the human skull	5	Maize
HISTORICAL TIME			
Panel 2, scenes 2.2, 2.1, and 2.3			
1-	Founder of the lineage	7	Lightning
2-	Jaguar Lord with blowgun	7	Lord or 7 Jaguar
3-	Personification of the God of Rain and Lightning	13	Earthquake
4-	Personification of the young God of Maize	5	Maize
5-	Obliterated personage or simply named (?)	10	Rain
6-	Obliterated personage or simply named (?)	10	Knot
7-	Main personage in ballgame scene	11	Deer
8-	Jaguar Lord offering in the temple	4	Earthquake
Panel 3, scene 3.1			
9-	Mortuary bundle in scene 3.1	6	Maize
10-	Personage with headdress of the supreme deity	6	Grass
Panel 2, scene 2.5			
11-	Mortuary bundle in scene 2.5	5	Reed
12-	Personification of the God of Rain and Lightning	8	Knot
'Panel' 5			
13-	Last personage named in the paintings	10	

[22] There are several differences in the identification of calendrical names presented here and those proposed by Matadamas in his latest publication (2005: 408-409), including glyph 13E between panels 1 and 2 (read by him as 13A), glyph 10C in scene 2.1 (read by him as 10Z), glyph 10A in scene 2.1 (read by him as ?A), glyph 7M in scene 2.2 (not identified by him), glyph 7X or 7B in scene 2.2 (not identified by him), glyph 6J in scene 3.1 (read by him as 5J), glyph 5J in scene 3.2 (not identified by him), and glyph 10Ñ in scene 4.1 (read by him as a noncalendrical version of glyph Ñ). It should be stressed that Matadamas does not explicitly view the calendrical names as forming a genealogical record.

Table 4. Comparison of key features in the cosmogram on page 1 in codex Tezcatlipoca and the quadripartite narrative painted in tomb 1 from Jaltepetongo.

Cardinal direction	Cosmogram in codex Tezcatlipoca	Painted murals in tomb 1 from Jaltepetongo
Trees		
East	Flowery tree [xiloxochitl]	Fruit tree
North	Spiked tree [pochote espinoso]	Not drawn?
West	Thorny tree [huizache]	Fruit tree
South	Tree with pods [cacao]	Fruit tree
Bases of the trees		
East	Platform with solar disk	Hill sign with roots
North	Alligator (the earth)	Not drawn?
West	An insect	Hill sign with root and water glyphs
South	Vessel, blood-letter and rubber ball	Hill sign with roots and apical ancestor
Birds		
East	Quetzal	A parrot?
North	Hawk	Not drawn?
West	Hummingbird	Identification uncertain, but not hummingbirds
South	Macaw	Macaws?
Deities		
Center	God of Fire	Possible correspondence with Deity 10Ñ on panel 4.1 (Fire Serpent)
East	Divine Flint of Sacrifice	Possible correspondence with scene 2.1 (decapitation of Maize God) on east wall
	The Sun	No correspondence
South	God of Maize	Close correspondence with decapitation of Maize God in scene 2.1 on the southeast corner
	God of Death	Close correspondence with decapitation of Maize God in scene 2.1 on the southeast corner
West	God of Water	Close correspondence with Water sign under the tree of the West
	God of Weaving and Sexuality	Possible correspondence with fine textiles in mortuary bundles, and emphasis on genealogical continuity in scenes 2.5 and 3.1 on the west wall.
North	God Heart of the Mountain	Unknown (possible allusion to Mountain of Sustenance is on the opposite cardinal direction)
	God of Earth and Rain	Unknown (a personification of this deity is painted on the east wall)

Monkey for step-fret: *Xicalcoliuhqui*.[23] Spanish glosses associated to depictions of mantles with the *Xicalcoliuhqui* design (doubled and interlocked) in codex Magliabechiano (pages 5 verso and 6) identify them as 'mantles with the design of a twisted gourd bowl' [manta de xícara tuerta], a translation that can be confirmed by other sources. *Xicalli*, according to Siméon (1963: 693) means 'a calabash or gourd, a type of wooden vase for drinking water', and *Coliuhqui* is translated by Molina (1977) and Siméon (1963: 109) as 'twisted' or 'curved'. Citing a personal communication from Joseph Campbell, Huckert (2005: 5) further discusses the implications of parsing the term *Coliuhqui* from *co:lli*, which means 'grandfather', that is, someone twisted by a hunchback, and links such parsing to an argument advanced by Rands (1955: 279 and 311-312) that in the Maya codices there is a systematic correspondence between the pouring of rainwater and the curved posture of the human torso. Furthermore, she provides ethnographic evidence from Veracruz and the Maya area for the conception of Rain Gods as elders. The fact that step-fret designs in the murals of tomb 1 from Jaltepetongo decorate as well the back wall of the temple in scene 2.5 also suggests that the building was dedicated to the cult of the God of Rain, an interpretation further supported by the serpent drawn over the temple. In such a context, the step-fret design may be a metaphor for clouds (Beyer 1965: 71).

Throughout the arguments presented in this essay it has become evident that the paintings in the crypt share epigraphic and iconographic similarities with Zapotec conventions, but contrary to the proposal that the murals represent a peripheral Zapotec manifestation (Matadamas 2001), their stylistic and calendrical affiliations are closer to the Ñuiñe script. Two main criteria support the latter contention: the way the year signs are represented, and the type of year bearers in the annual dates. There are, in addition, other graphic usages more common to Ñuiñe writing, or that at least have been documented thus far only on inscriptions from the Mixtecas, including for example the representation of mortuary bundles in supine and extended position, of war clubs, and of the 'scalloped band' sign and the 'spiral' glyph. The T-shaped arrangement of numeral dots in the annual date 4 Reed in scene 3.1 has also been documented in Ñuiñe conventions but not in Zapotec scribal practices.

The narrative painted in the walls of tomb 1 from Jaltepetongo evidences the pan-Mesoamerican distribution of the story of creation recounted in the Popol Vuh. That a version of this story came to light first in a Quiche epic dating to the 16th century, vignettes of the mythic account were later identified in Classic period polychrome vessels from the southern Maya lowlands and the Guatemalan highlands, and passages of

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[23] The band with step-frets designs in the murals of tomb 1 from Jaltepetongo must be analogous to the bands with scrolls painted in several approximately coeval tombs from the Central Valleys of Oaxaca, including, for example, tomb 103 from Monte Albán, tomb 3 from Xoxocotlán, and tomb 5 from Cerro de la Campana, Suchilquitongo (cf. Urcid 2004 and 2005).

the story were recently uncovered in the Formative period murals of San Bartolo, in the southern Maya lowlands, does not mean that the account was invented by the Maya. As Terrence Kaufman cogently argues (personal communication 2003), the 20 day names of the Mesoamerican calendar appear to be symbolic references to excerpts from this same epic story, an account with deep roots and a now blurred historical past.

Appendix 1. Unfolding of the possible sequences in the annual dates listed in Table 2.

(the unfolding proceeds from bottom to top, highlighting annual dates in bold;
asterisks in the first sequence mark the possible position of the missing date in the murals)

Sequence 1			Sequence 2			Sequence 3			Sequence 4			Sequence 5			Sequence 6		
47	**11**	**House**	19	**4**	**Reed**	7	**4**	**Reed**	15	**12**	**Reed**	52	**11**	**House**	48	**12**	**Rabbit**
46	10	Flint	18	3	Rabbit	6	3	Rabbit	14	11	Rabbit	51	10	Flint	47	**11**	**House**
45	9	Reed	17	2	House	5	2	House	13	10	House	50	9	Reed	46	10	Flint
44	8	Rabbit	16	1	Flint	4	1	Flint	12	9	Flint	49	8	Rabbit	45	9	Reed
43	7	House	15	13	Reed	3	13	Reed	11	8	Reed	48	7	House	44	8	Rabbit
42	6	Flint	14	12	Rabbit	2	**12**	**Rabbit**	10	7	Rabbit	47	6	Flint	43	7	House
41	5	Reed	13	**11**	**House**	1	**11**	**House**	9	6	House	46	5	Reed	42	6	Flint
40	4	Rabbit	12	10	Flint				8	5	Flint	45	4	Rabbit	41	5	Reed
39	3	House	11	9	Reed				7	**4**	**Reed**	44	3	House	40	4	Rabbit
38	2	Flint	10	8	Rabbit				6	3	Rabbit	43	2	Flint	39	3	House
37	1	Reed	9	7	House				5	2	House	42	1	Reed	38	2	Flint
36	13	Rabbit	8	6	Flint				4	1	Flint	41	13	Rabbit	37	1	Reed
35	12	House*	7	5	Reed				3	13	Reed	40	12	House	36	13	Rabbit
34	11	Flint	6	4	Rabbit				2	12	Rabbit	39	11	Flint	35	12	House
33	10	Reed	5	3	House				1	**11**	**House**	38	10	Reed	34	11	Flint
32	9	Rabbit	4	2	Flint							37	9	Rabbit	33	10	Reed
31	8	House	3	1	Reed							36	8	House	32	9	Rabbit
30	7	Flint	2	13	Rabbit							35	7	Flint	31	8	House
29	6	Reed	1	**12**	**House**							34	6	Reed	30	7	Flint
28	5	Rabbit										33	5	Rabbit	29	6	Reed
27	4	House										32	4	House	28	5	Rabbit
26	3	Flint										31	3	Flint	27	4	House
25	2	Reed										30	2	Reed	26	3	Flint
24	1	Rabbit										29	1	Rabbit	25	2	Reed
23	13	House										28	13	House	24	1	Rabbit
22	12	Flint*										27	12	Flint*	23	13	House
21	11	Reed										26	11	Reed	22	12	Flint*
20	10	Rabbit										25	10	Rabbit	21	11	Reed
19	9	House										24	9	House	20	10	Rabbit
18	8	Flint										23	8	Flint	19	9	House
17	7	Reed										22	7	Reed	18	8	Flint
16	6	Rabbit										21	6	Rabbit	17	7	Reed
15	5	House										20	5	House	16	6	Rabbit
14	4	Flint										19	4	Flint	15	5	House
13	3	Reed										18	3	Reed	14	4	Flint
12	2	Rabbit										17	2	Rabbit	13	3	Reed
11	1	House										16	1	House	12	2	Rabbit
10	13	Flint										15	13	Flint	11	1	House
9	12	Reed*										14	12	Reed	10	13	Flint
8	11	Rabbit										13	11	Rabbit	9	12	Reed
7	10	House										12	10	House	8	11	Rabbit
6	9	Flint										11	9	Flint	7	10	House
5	8	Reed										10	8	Reed	6	9	Flint
4	7	Rabbit										9	7	Rabbit	5	8	Reed
3	6	House										8	6	House	4	7	Rabbit
2	5	Flint										7	5	Flint	3	6	House
1	**4**	**Reed**										6	**4**	**Reed**	2	5	Flint
												5	3	Rabbit	1	**4**	**Reed**
												4	2	House			
												3	1	Flint			
												2	13	Reed			
												1	**12**	**Rabbit**			

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Maarten E.R.G.N. Jansen

Social and Religious Concepts in Ñuu Dzaui Visual Art

Ñuu Dzaui, the Mixtec people and region in Southern Mexico, is the focal point for a research project carried out in the Faculty of Archaeology and the CNWS Research School of Asian African and Amerindian Studies at Leiden University. It started in the 1970's as an iconological investigation of ancient Mexican pictorial manuscripts (codices and *lienzos*), under the direction of Dr. Ferdinand Anders (now emeritus professor, Vienna University), and has subsequently developed into a broad interest in Mesoamerican culture-history and languages (cf. Anders & Jansen 1988). At present, this long-term project is strongly inspired by the archaeological fieldwork and interdisciplinary analysis carried out by my Leiden colleagues Corinne Hofman and Menno Hoogland and their PhD candidates on different islands in the Caribbean, with a focus on mobility and exchange in precolonial societies. Together we are studying in a complementary way the structure, development and ideology of the ancient communities and 'village-states'. In both regions the term *cacicazgo* is used to refer to the precolonial polities, taken from the title *cacique*, used for the Caribbean 'chief', and applied by the Spanish conquistadors also to the native aristocracy in Mesoamerica. As the specific situation of both regions is quite different, our research projects employ different methods and have different foci, but the comparative discussion of this topic is both stimulating and illuminating.

Our work receives the support not only from Leiden University (Faculty of Archaeology and CNWS Research School of Asian, African and Amerindian Studies), but also of the Netherlands Foundation for Scientific Research (NWO) and the Royal Netherlands Academy of Arts and Sciences (KNAW).

Leiden research on Mesoamerican heritage

As for the progress of the specific research on Ñuu Dzaui, Gabina Aurora Pérez Jiménez and I have been dedicating the past years to writing a detailed synthesis of precolonial historiography and to a reflection on questions of meaning, symbolism and cosmology, particularly examining the nature of power and rulership. We are basing ourselves on our earlier commentaries on specific codices, such as Yuta Tnoho or Vindobonensis (Anders & Jansen & Pérez Jiménez 1992a), Tonindeye or Nuttall (Anders & Jansen &

Pérez Jiménez 1992b) Añute or Selden (Jansen & Pérez Jiménez 2000), Ñuu Ñaña or Egerton as well as a number of Mixtec colonial texts and smaller codices (Jansen 1994), in combination with the on-going study of the Mixtec language (Pérez Jiménez 2003) and the interpretation of the ritual-divinatory codices known as the 'Borgia Group', which we have renamed the 'Teoamoxtli Group' (e.g. Anders & Jansen 1994, Anders & Jansen & Pérez Jiménez 1994; Anders & Jansen & Reyes García 1993; Jansen 1998).

Several PhD candidates and postdoc researchers have been working with us and widened the scope of the research to other areas and topics, such as the Teoamoxtli group (Peter van der Loo 1987), Cuicatec codices and the *lienzos* from the Coixtlahuaca area (Bas van Doesburg 2001, 2002), *lienzos* from Michoacan (Hans Roskamp 1999), the Zapotec *lienzos* (Michel Oudijk 2000), Codex Azcatitlan and the Sigüenza Map as examples of Mexica historiography (María Castañeda 1997), Mexica conceptualisation and use of animals (Miguel Angel Nicolás Caretta 2001), the *Lienzo* of Cuauhquechollan, dealing with the Cuauhquecholteca participation in the conquest of Guatemala (Florine Asselbergs 2004), Maya iconography and epigraphy (Roswitha Manning 1993, Erik Boot 2005), the ancient history and literature of the K'iche' in connection with the symbolic landscape around Rabinal, Guatemala (Ruud van Akkeren 2000), and the history of the native peoples of Nicaragua (Laura van Broekhoven 2002)

In order to connect the native reports on political interaction with archaeological, geographical and economical realities, Laura van Broekhoven and Alex Geurds have made important contributions to the NWO- financed program '*Mixtec City-States: nature and development of indigenous socio-political organization*'. Participating in archaeological mapping activities under the direction of the regional centre of the Instituto Nacional de Antropología e Historia in Oaxaca, they developed a better understanding of natural and built environments in the municipalities of Tilantongo and Apoala, two famous and crucial places in the Ñuu Dzaui codices (Geurds 2007). In addition, they started a study of the 'vertical economy' and the market system in the Mixtec Highlands, which, we suppose, underlies the political landscape of the postclassic village-states.

Another link to archaeological data is established by Gilda Hernández Sánchez, who, receiving a scholarship from the CNWS Research School, wrote a PhD dissertation on *tipo códice* ceramics of the so-called Mixteca-Puebla style (2005). She has shown that the painted motifs in codex style, which decorate these vessels, express specific concepts, short statements, often paired as *difrasismos*, which are a diagnostic element of Mesoamerican ceremonial language. Ubaldo López García studies this same literary figure in traditional Mixtec discourse today. Other work in progress concerns the life cycle in present-day Ñuu Dzaui communities (Juan Julián Caballero), contemporary Mixtec oral tradition and religion (Hans-Jörg Witter), the role of symbolic geography in archaeology of Oaxaca (Raúl Matadamas Díaz) and in intercultural education (Benjamín Maldonado Alvarado), Zapotec identity (Manuel Ríos Morales), and colonial documents in Ngiwa (Michael Swanton).

We are happy to present at the occasion of this Academy colloquium in Amsterdam

a summary of our results in the form of a new commentary on Codex Bodley, which we now call Codex Ñuu Tnoo – Ndisi Nuu, published as the first volume in the series *Treasures from the Bodleian Library* (2005). We specially value the participation of the series editor, Dr. Samuel Fanous, who has guided the edition of this work with great enthusiasm and insight. This manuscript is a crucial source for identifying the main village-states in Ñuu Dzaui and reconstructing their dynastic history during the Post-classic period (AD 900 – 1521), especially their early relations with the remnants of the Classic acropolis of Monte Albán (Jansen, Kröfges & Oudijk 1998). Furthermore, this extraordinary source throws light on the interaction between polities (and their ruling lineages) both within the Mixtec region and with neighbors in the larger Mesoamerican sphere, e.g. with the Toltecs and Aztecs of Central Mexico (Jansen 2006).

Towards a postcolonial perspective

Colonization has made the Ñuu Dzaui into a 'people without history', but the small corpus of pictorial manuscripts together with other examples of communicative visual art that survive from the precolonial times, opens a window to the events, social order and worldview of the precolonial past. The ancient messages are contextualized in a cultural and natural landscape. Composed according to the concepts and forms of the native language, Dzaha Dzaui, in concordance with age-old values, these texts reflect specific viewpoints, as well as historical experiences and contingencies. Originally, our interpretive objectives were very much defined in terms of the evolution of social complexity and early statehood in the Americas. As the project progressed, however, we became aware of several other dimensions, in particular the lively presence and relevance of the Mesoamerican worldview, ethos and oral tradition, as well as the agency and needs of contemporary indigenous communities.

Reading the codices is an exercise in iconographical interpretation, a special 'branch' of archaeology and art history. It is common practice to compare the outcome of the descriptive analysis of such manuscripts with archaeological and historical data. The study of ancient Mesoamerica, however, is the archaeology of a living culture. The oral traditions that still continue today, although more and more eroded and endangered, provide precious clues for understanding structures and elements of the ancient stories, and especially insights in the cultural concepts and motivations of the protagonists. In other words, many aspects of the present-day Ñuu Dzaui world are directly relevant for understanding archaeological remains. At the same time, the uncovering of that history may be connected to emancipatory education and cultural revival in the present.

In our earlier work we already sensed quite often the great opportunities that lie in combining the perspectives and perceptions of the investigating outsiders and the expert insiders, but also the frictions that may occur between them, and the colonial traumas and injustices that still lurk in the background. The dramatic tensions in the field

simply make a purely intellectual approach quite unsatisfactory (cf. Jansen 2004, Van Broekhoven 2006). It is in this context that we proceeded to change the alien designations of the Mexican codices into names that are more in accordance with their contents and cultural background (Jansen & Pérez Jiménez 2004).

From the beginning of the above-mentioned project on Mixtec socio-political organization (2000) we wanted our study to escape from the characteristic format of making local people a mere 'object' of study. Looking for a creative approach, we included in the research design the making of a documentary movie. This, we sensed, would introduce another way of looking and might capture the experential and emotional side of life in Ñuu Dzaui. At the same time it confronted us even more strongly with the issue of representation and its long history. The points of view of Western scholarship in this respect are not imparcial nor objective, but rather, as Foucault has taught us, determined by relationships of power and interests.

The justification of colonial conquests was first and foremost the calification of 'other peoples' as not having the true religion (Christianity), neither the organization nor the intellectual capacities of Europeans. The natives' self-defense against colonial invasions immediately led to their stigmatization as 'wild', 'cruel' and 'violent'. This image of the colonized other as 'half devil and half child' is still among us. A good illustration is the fact that descriptions of Mesoamerican civilization – be it in a museum context or in a work of fiction – nearly always foreground the ceremonial execution of enemies in the form of a 'human sacrifice' as a prime characteristic (compare the focus on scalping in North America, mentioned by Taylor, this volume). The resulting emphasis on dark and bloody imagery of 'primitive violence' – quite curious coming from a culture which has brought us the witch-hunt, slavery, (neo-)colonial massacres, the holocaust, predatory capitalism and the atomic bomb – is especially visible in products such as commercial movies that are destined for 'the public at large' and generally indulge in the most sensational and gory effects, without any regard for the dignity or the feelings of the people concerned. But a related predicament is inherent to a lot of traditional anthropological work, which tends to situate the Western investigator on a higher intellectual level than his 'informants'. This has created a whole tradition of anthropological cinematographic products that show aesthetically fascinating images of exoticed others as mere illustrations of an analytic discourse by a Western anthropologist, presented in the form of a voice-over. The portrayed people are fully embedded in an outsider's discourse, their acts being explained to 'us' by Western specialists, and 'they' hardly came to word themselves. This old-fashioned way of representation entails many problems, both of an ethical and a scientific nature, as it tends to reaffirm (and deepen) the 'we-them' divide and to project all kinds of pre-conceived notions on 'the other'. The natural tendency to see the ego-group as normal and rational, reaffirms the already existing vision of the other as 'strange' and 'irrational' (in earlier days as 'primitive' and 'pre-logical'). Thus, the worldview of 'the other' becomes typically characterized as 'magic', 'driven by fear', etc. All this has epistemological consequences. Violent and discriminatory images

actually tell us more about those who propagate them than about the cultures referred to. Consequently, they preclude an open intercultural dialogue and empathic understanding.

These considerations played an important role in the birth of the documentary movie *El Rebozo de mi Madre*, directed by Itandehui Jansen, as part of our project (see also the contributions by I. Jansen and Verstraten, this volume). Precisely to avoid the treatment of 'others' as mere objects, this movie was conceived as a very personal account, the story of a personal quest, in which all participants share their experiences, troubles and insights with the public. They do so in the local languages – Sahin Sau (a modern variant of Dzaha Dzaui) or Mixtec, on the one hand, and Spanish on the other –, without being overruled by the voice-over or an otherwise dominant mediatorship of an omniscient anthropologist. The presence of a Western investigator (myself) is rapidly diluted as the movie goes on. Thanks to this approach, I feel, the documentary has become an intimate and poetic portrait of life in Ñuu Dzaui, which brings the beholder in direct contact with members of the community of *Ñuu Ndeya* (Chalcatongo). In producing this encounter, the director has merged her insider's knowledge of the local circumstances with the love and the longing of a child of two worlds. The result is a multivocal artistic creation, sensitive to the ways and values of the people. Instead of 'a movie about Mixtecs', it has become, at least in part, a Ñuu Dzaui movie.

Sharing many, sometimes quite difficult, moments of this creative process and personal testimony, we were influenced in our thinking about the fundaments of our research and stimulated to reconsider several aspects of our interpretive efforts. Furthermore, just as the making of the movie is a collective work, in which a film crew collaborates with many local individuals, the interpretation of ancient art and texts can only advance through the working together of researchers (who may come from all over the world) with the inheritors of the culture, the Ñuu Dzaui people today. This is a practical form of the hermeneutic 'merging of horizons'.

Here I will discuss some of the topics that came up during this learning process, focusing on some interesting and instructive parallels between *El Rebozo de mi Madre*, and the ancient pictorial manuscripts.

Clouds

Like cinema, codices have an important narrative and performative aspect. They are works of art, not simply 'sources'. Most likely, these paintings were points of departure for a declamation by a gifted storyteller. The analogy with similar historical texts and images in the Classic Maya sites suggests that the locale of the performance was the ceremonial centre. Here the people gathered at the occasion of dynastic rituals or other collective manifestations, to listen to presentations of ancient history. The creation and cultivation of collective memory asked for a discourse with an epic and dramatic quality, with different layers of significance, connected to multiple human experiences. As

Karlos Tachisavi (this volume) has pointed out in his characterization of the poetic, such texts have their silences and creative voids. Peter Verstraten's analysis (this volume) already mentioned the clouds in *El Rebozo de mi Madre* as symbolic indicators of this 'openness'. In fact, we are dealing here with a well-known Mesoamerican methaphor: the Nahuatl expression *mixtitlan ayauhtitlan*, 'in the clouds and the mists', refers to the realm of mystery. At the same time, clouds connote the presence of the Rain God (*Iya Dzavui*), the Patron Deity of the Ñuu Dzaui land and people. The (popular but wrong) Nahuatl translation of their ethnonym as *Mixteca*, 'Inhabitants of the Land of the Clouds', only reinforces this connection. The movie does not include images of the rainy season, but the clouds manifest the divine presence in the countryside, underlining the non-explicable and indomitable character of Nature.

Ancient codex painters would have loved this aspect of the movie, as we may infer from a similar use of the same symbolism in Codex Mictlan (Laud), p. 23. Clouds surround the Rain God who proceeds walking over the ocean. The twenty day-signs are connected to his body: his power dominates and pervades time.

A scene with a similar meaning we find in Codex Yuta Tnoho (Vindobonensis), p. 47. Here the protagonist is Lord 9 Wind, an important primordial divine force, who brings the waters of heaven to the mountains of Ñuu Dzaui. Although represented in human shape, as a priest-spirit figure, his diagnostic attribute is the Wind mask. Indeed, he is the Wind God, *Quetzalcoatl Ehecatl* to the Aztecs, the Plumed Serpent called *Koo Sau*, 'Rain Serpent' by the inhabitants of Ñuu Ndeya (Chalcatongo), which corresponds to *Coo Dzavui* in 16th Century Mixtec orthography. He is the divine Creator of arts and culture, the Founder of social-religous order and of the political landscape. Invested with great powers and tasks, he descended from the Place of Heaven, the seat of the Ancestors, the source of authority, located on top of the Mountain of Heaven, Kaua Kandiui (*Cavua Caa Andevui* in 16th century orthography) near Yuta Tnoho (Apoala). Today, his manifestation in nature is seen in whirlwinds and impressive cloud formations. In other words, the Mixtec Culture Hero, *Koo Sau*, is intimately related to Lord Rain, *Iha Sau* today (*Iya Dzavui* in the 16th century). Both have a cloudy aspect, which is not only a natural condition but also a symbol of their mysterious power. The heavenly waters carried by these deities are a metaphor for life (see also Witter, this volume).

At a later occasion, a devotee of this Creator-Deity and Culture-Hero, the priest 12 Wind 'Smoke surrounds his Eye', also descended from Heaven (Codex Tonindeye or Nuttall, p. 19). His given name (or title) suggests already that he was involved in visionary activities. He is shown arriving at the ancient ceremonial centre of Monte Albán. His descent is enveloped in clouds.

The same range of connotations is present in the depiction of the Sacred Tree of Origin in Codex Añute (Selden), p. 2: a huge ceiba (*yutnu nuu*) is surrounded by serpents of mist and darkness, as visionary and divine powers guarding the birth of the Father of the Dynasty. Later, the main town, Sand Place, i.e. Añute (Jaltepec), is itself qualified as 'Town of Clouds', which we may interpret as referring both to the clouds that usually

form around the main mountain, and to the mysterious, divine character of the dynasty.

Not surprisingly, the motif of clouds or smoke (presumably from incense offerings) is frequently painted on the rims of Mixteca-Puebla style pottery (see Hernández Sánchez, this volume) and on carved stones that depict visionary rituals. We find this motif already in Classic Mixtec art (Ñuiñe style), for example on the upper band of the urn from Cerro de las Minas, Tomb 5 (now in the regional museum, Santo Domingo, Oaxaca city), which represents a ruler entering in trance and transforming into his nahual, the fire serpent (Jansen 2004: 246). The scrolls that sometimes occur as frames on carved stones may have a similar meaning. A very early example may be the monolith at Yucuita (see Rivera Guzmán, this volume).

Interpreted in this way, the clouds are indexes of life force (rain) and of religiously charged mystery (vision). This connection is already expressed in the famous Preclassic rock carvings of Chalcatzingo, which show a priest in trance (and maybe reading a codex) within a cave (represented as a serpent), while outside the rain-drops fall from the clouds. The same complex of ideas is associated with the Plumed Serpent.

Place

El Rebozo de mi Madre gives a lot of attention to the landscape and the impressive presence of natural phenomena (clouds, winds etc). The atmosphere is not one of human individuals confronting nature as either an obstacle or a resource, but on the contrary of Nature embracing humanity. This – admittedly quite subjective – feeling imposes itself on us when we visit the ruins of many ancient ceremonial centers. It corresponds to the Ñuu Dzaui vision of Land, Nature or the Universe as being endowed with superhuman agency. Many natural elements are addressed as 'Divine Lords', e.g. Lord Sun (*Iha Ndikandii*) and Lord Corn (*Iha Nuni*), while Earth itself is invoked as *Ñuhu Ndehyu*, the Spirit of Humid Earth as Inhabitant or Owner of the Place, in Spanish: *San Cristobal, San Cristina, Santo Lugar*.

Special significance is given to a specific place of origin. In the case of the movie this is Ñuu Ndeya (Chalcatongo). The typical story line in the pictorial manuscripts starts with a toponymic sign, representing the sovereign comunity, the *ñuu*, 'town', or, in political terms, the *yuvui tayu*, 'mat and throne', i.e. the seat of authority, the 'nation'. This was 'home' to the audience. The antecedent is already manifest in the classic carved stones of the Ñuiñe style: the ruler (represented as a jaguar or another powerful being) appears seated on the mountain, probably short for *yucu nduta*, '(our) mountain and water', i.e. 'our community' (called *altepetl* in Nahuatl, a term with exactly the same meaning).

We may say that in pictorial manuscripts the *locale* generally appears as the true protagonist of the story. It is the constant element, the base of the dynasty, which is stated at the beginning as the toponymic sign. Kings and queens come and go, but the place (community) remains.

Several investigators, therefore, have observed that each manuscript represents a 'local bias'. What happens is that these performances do not aim at some form of overall 'objective' historiography, but rather try to make people feel connected to their place of belonging, where their umbilical cords had been buried. Often this first reference to the community includes a reference to its main sanctuary (*Huahi Ñuhu*, 'house of the deity', today *vehe ñuhu*, the church). The Map of *Chiyo Cahnu* (Teozacualco), for example, contains the dynastic line of Black Frieze, i.e. *Ñuu Tnoo*, 'Black Town' (Tilantongo), with its Temple of Heaven (*Huahi Andevui*).

The landscape, inhabited and protected by divine powers, such as the Plumed Serpent, provides a religious context for the human experience. An illustrative example is the representation of the Sacred Valley of Yuta Tnoho (Apoala) in Codex Tonindeye (Nuttall), p. 36. The characteristic elements of the landscape – the two rivers in a valley surrounded by cliffs, the Cave of the Serpent on one side, the waterfall on the other, with close to it the Tree of Origin – are organized in such a way that they resemble a large serpent (with its head on our left and the waterfall as his feathered tail on our right, as one would see the valley from the ceremonial site on the nearby peak of Kaua Kandiui, the Mountain of Heaven). The famous reliefs of the Temple of the Plumed Serpent in Xochicalco, for example, exhibit a similar emblem. Using such a device, the painter identifies this town, which plays a central role in the story about the origin of the dynasties, and in fact represents the place as a divine body, a locale in which the deity (in this case the Plumed Serpent as the great Culture Hero) manifests himself.

A similar symbolic device is used in the painting of the sacred landscape of Ñuu Ndecu (San Miguel Achiutla) with its Tree of Origin in the Codex Añute (Selden), p. 2. The town is represented on top of a river or lake, probably representing the *laguna* that, according to local oral tradition, once upon a time occupied a large part of the Achiutla valley. Within these primordial waters three stones, each with its own toponymic identification, are shown upholding and sustaining the main town. Their position clearly defines them as the three *yeye*, the stones (*tenamastles*) in the fire that support the baking plate (*comal*) or cooking pot. The painting compares the act of foundation to putting those three stones in place (as fundaments of the flat Earth).

Especially *lienzos* and maps lend themselves to a presentation of landscapes that contain events and personages, ordered according to a spatial layout. Usually, a large scene shows toponymic signs in an approximate geographical order. In several *lienzos* and maps a series of boundary place-glyphs surrounds the territory of the central place, while genealogies or various events are represented within this territory. This is the case in the Map of Chiyo Cahnu (Teozacualco) and the Lienzo of Yucu Satuta (Zacatepec). Compositions may be much more complex, however. An eloquent example is the Lienzo of Tlapiltepec, which shows the dynasties that ruled the village-states in the Coixtlahuaca Valley and their participation in an expedition towards the North, concretely the towns of Cuauhtinchan and Tepeaca in the State of Puebla (Jansen 1992). Similarly, the Lienzo of Cuauhquechollan, deciphered by Florine Asselbergs, narrates the participa-

tion of this town's troups in the Spanish conquest of Guatemala. In both *lienzos* the narrative unfolds while following and adapting to the geographical reality.

Such conventions can be easily related to the worldview of most Ñuu Dzaui people today: the community is the centre of human agency, the true protagonist of the social sphere and therefore of history in general. The *autoridades* (*presidentes* with their *consejos municipales*, as well as *mayordomos* and priests) are just there to serve. The community is souvereign and intimately related to its territory. The Land (= Earth, Nature) is the focus of attention, both in local political life and in contemporaneous indigenous movements.

Time

The creation of a movie, obviously, confronts the scriptwriter and the director with the need of reflecting on the narrative structure, and, consequently, with the use or representation of time. A similar challenge confronted the ancient codex-painters. *El Rebozo de mi Madre* is not composed as a linear narrative, based on cause-and-effect relationships, but rather as an interlocking mosaic of different human experiences and relationships, embedded within the meta-narrative of the filmmaker's reencounter with her community of origin. Together with the prominence of place, this composition resembles that of certain pictographic works, even though they contain specific historical narratives. Movie and codices have in common that there are references to the passage of time but in a rather cyclical and symbolic way, a far cry from the strong preoccupation with chronology and causality that characterizes Western historiography.

Time is basically there to bind and embed human activities within an overarching cosmic design. In the codices and related ancient texts the first sunrise means a watershed in ancient history, separating the primordial, sacred narratives (the darkness and mists that surround the actions of the divine powers) from the agency of humans, who are living in the (time of) daylight. The opening scene of a dynastic history generally contains a date (year and day), which does not have a chronological function but refers to that first dawn, i.e. the sacred time of foundation of the community and the dynasty.

The Codex Yuta Tnoho (Vindobonensis) connects elements of a linear story (First Couple – Birth of Lord 9 Wind – Tree of Apoala – First Sunrise) with an emphasis on inauguration rituals and places with their respective founding couple, all connected to specific dates in the Mesoamerican 52-year cycle, presumably celebrated in cyclical commemorations. Its final four pages, each with four founded places, is far removed form a 'plot' as common in 'classic' Western linear narratives (e.g. the bulk of Hollywood movies).

Days occur already in very early inscriptions. The corner of a famous Late Preclassic platform at Huamelulpan contains a number of days next to the carved image of a lizard. It is not clear if these signs are the calendar names of individuals or specific ritual dates, but actually there is not much difference: in any case these were important days to remember and celebrate in accordance with the religious function of the building.

The lizard accompanies and assists the Rain God (cf. the cited scene of Codex Mictlan, p. 23, and similar representations at the Aztec Templo Mayor). The fact that the corner is marked with such an emblematic animal suggests that the Patron of this early structure at Huamelulpan was *Iya Dzavui*.

A unique precolonial example of a linear and plot-driven drama is the story of Lord 8 Deer and Lady 6 Monkey, but here too we find that religious ethos and epic quality overrule the preoccupation with 'what really happened'. These are not precise annals, nor lawsuits, but literary narratives based on (the perceptions of) historical and geographic reality.

Similarly, the genealogical registers have a ritual and divinatory dimension, which influences and marginalizes the chronological aspect. First, it is noteworthy that the main works (Codex Ñuu Tnoo – Ndisi Nuu and Codex Añute) are not 'finished', but end with open lines, explicitly meant to continue the narrative with coming generations. Moreover, all historical codices have little-explored intertextual relationships with the religious (ritual –divinatory) 'Books of Wisdom' or 'Teoamoxtli Group' (Borgia Group). The calendar names (birth-days) of historical protagonists, such as Lord 8 Deer, have, of course, a position in the divinatory calendar, well known to the ancient priests, and consequently contain messages, less obvious to modern readers, about the character and destiny of these individuals.

The sacred days of foundation are comparable with the contemporaneous Saints' days, which may be interpreted as the calendar name of the community. The codices mention selected days for marriage ceremonies (e.g. 7 Eagle being the favorite day for marriages of the Ñuu Tnoo dynasty) as well as other symbolic dates.

The fragmentary and contradictory character of chronological references in the postclassic history of Central Mexico may be due, at least in part, to the phenomenon of dates being mentioned because of their symbolic aspect rather than as chronological markers (the other part consisting in problems of transmission and record-keeping, coupled with misunderstandings in the early colonial period).

On the other hand, once we understand the metaphorical references, there is much to be learned about historical processes and their mental correlates. It is interesting, for example, that the pictographic record of dynastic history starts approximately around AD 900, i.e. exactly contemporaneous with what archaeologists call the beginning of the postclassic period. This cannot be a coincidence. A major socio-political and cultural-historical change took place in that period, leaving its traces in the archaeological data, which now may be defined from an outsiders' etic perspective. The codices demonstrate that also the Ñuu Dzaui historians perceived that process as a break with earlier times.

Complementarity

In choosing her protagonists, the scriptwriter / director of *El Rebozo de mi Madre* quite naturally arrived at a focus on the life-stories of couples of women and men. The same we see in the codices: the royal couple is the basic unit of genealogical history. The

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interviews with the couples in the movie are directed toward the human aspect, starting with how the two individuals met. A culminating point, centrally placed in the movie, is the traditional marriage ceremony in the village of San Pablo Tijaltepec with the colourful traditional dress and the scene of marriage on the mat, the *parangón* pronounced by the elder, and the counting of the cloth (dowry).

Also the codices present as human protagonist mostly the (royal) couple. The history of the community is manifested in the emblematic series of royal couples, each consisting of a venerated Lord (*Iya*) and Lady (*Iyadzehe*), who together were the 'Father and Mother' of the people (*ta-dehe* in Apoala), while the citizens are 'children of the community'. There is an implicit unity and a connotation of sacredness in these titles.

The couple is generally represented as seated on a mat or within a house on on top of or next to the sign of the place they rule. The mat on which the couple is seated is indicating both marriage (*huico yuvui*, 'feast of the mat') and power by taking possession of their realm (*yuvui tayu*, 'mat and throne'). The house may be explicitly qualified as a palace (*aniñe*) through the cicles of stone mosaic in the roof, like the *Casa de la Cacica* in Yucu Ndaa (Tepozcolula). At the same time the house (*huahi*, today *vehe*) is much more than just the building: it includes the household, the family. In the discourse of the codices it is 'the royal house' (the *maison* in terms of Lévi-Strauss).

Seating is a crucial act. The present-day Mixtec verb is *ndukoo* (*yocoocoondi* in the 16th Century), 'to sit down', which connotes the idea of being established. In the movie we hear the expression 'have a place in the universe'. The seating of rulers is also important in the Classic Maya hieroglyphic texts, where the mat and throne appear as part (superfix) of the Emblem Glyph. It is interesting to notice an underlying reference to gender: the mat and throne represent the combination of a man (seated on small chair, piece of wood or stone) with a woman (seated on the mat in the characteristical Mesoamerican way with her legs doubled under her). This combination, in turn, points to two aspects of rulership: the inheritance through the ('vertical') lineage and the alliance with other royal lineages through ('horizontal') marriages. This theme became popular at the end of the Classic period, as is evidenced by late Monte Albán IIIb carved stones representing scenes of marriage and descendance. This may correspond to a growing importance of alliances between lineages in the political reality of that time.

The codices often show man and woman making the same gestures: both point their finger as a signal of authority and/or throw tobacco powder in the air for sanctification. In other cases the couple engages in complementary acts, one person making a statement or giving instructions (pointing finger), while the other is listening and accepting (with a raised or stretched out hand). This latter gesture is based on the word *ndaha*, meaning both 'hand' and 'tribute'. Such a combination of gestures may actually specify that one person holds the lineage authority, while the other is showing obedience. This is the case in the marriage scene of Lady 9 Wind of Añute (Jaltepec): she is the inheriting ruler, while her husband, a prince from Ñuu Tnoo (Tilantongo), is marrying into the lineage from the outside. Both Codex Añute (Selden), p. 5-IV, and Codex Ñuu Tnoo

(Bodley), p. 6-V, show her with the pointed finger and him with the stretched out hand.

The ancient equality in status of women and men was lost in colonial times with the male dominance of the Spanish colonial society. Codex Yodzo Yaha (Tecomaxtlahuaca), for example, was painted as documentation for a claim to be presented to Spanish authorities. The names of the male rulers are registered in the glosses. The female rulers appear next to their husbands in the painted text, but (with the exception of the last *cacica*) they are not identified as named persons. In the Codex Yodzo Cahi (Yahuitlan) the female rulers are left out altogether.

The movie addresses also cases of forced and arranged marriages. It is likely that most if not all of the dynastic marriages in ancient times were arranged as well. Most princesses married very young, obviously for political reasons. Contrary to the hostile propaganda toward native traditions, we do not find cases of young women being 'sold' in marriage.

Mobility

The migration, or rather diaspora, of the Mixtec people is such a dominant part of contemporary social reality that it is manifest in many modern studies, narratives and works of art. *El Rebozo de mi Madre* is no exception. Many persons of all ages have to leave their village because of economical and/or social reasons and migrate to Ñuu Kohyo (Mexico City) or places much further away (such as San Diego, Seattle, or Leiden). Obviously, this process entails many social consequences, on the one hand the abuses on both sides of the border, the suffering and dangers of the border crossing itself, as well as the daily insecurity and discrimination of migrant life, and on the other the establishment of long-distance support networks and the resulting changes in the communities of origin.

It is important to notice that in ancient times people travelled too, although obviously in quite different forms and circumstances. The biography of Lord 8 Deer 'Jaguar Claw' gives great importance to his journey to Cholula, which was a crucial step in his rise to power, and to his participation in the Toltec campaign to the land of the Maya. This theme has its antecedents in the Classic inscriptions that register the arrival of lords from Teotihuacan at Monte Albán and Tikal.

The marital alliances, so prominently described in the codices, connected dynasties over long distances and must have created or facilitated networks of a much wider and more intensive contact. We suppose that these connections were interwoven with exchange patterns provoked by the 'vertical economy' in the Ñuu Dzaui region (consequence of its marked differences in nature and production according to altitude). An interesting example of this phenomenon is the dress given to Lady 6 Monkey in the preparation of marriage, comparable to the counting of clothes in San Pablo Tijaltepec in the movie. It is a long dress as typically worn by women, a *huipil*, on which a conch is placed (Codex Añute, p. 7-II). We recognize it immediately as a *huipil de caracol*, i.e.

a dress coloured with purple. This was not a local product from the Highlands, where Añute (Jaltepec) is located, but certainly imported from the Mixtec Coast, where this 'industry' survives until today.

The position in nodes of such networks must have been a determining factor for the socio-political and economic 'importance' and 'power' of individuals and communities alike.

Communitas

In the codices the seated ruling couple may be considered an 'emblem' of the community. At the same time the sense of community (*communitas*) is constructed by and manifested in shared experiences and private and public rituals. There is a historical side to this: the consciousness of being a 'community of descendants', which cultivates the memory of its ancestors.

Today, the community is identified on a spiritual level by the Patron Saint. A related symbol is the *campana de oro*, the 'golden bell'. This is the church bell, calling upon the community (not only for mass but also to inform about the death of a community member) and thereby also defining it as a space of communication and a religious unit. The bell in the church tower or chapel is already prominenly present in early colonial pictorial manuscripts, such as the Codex Yodzo Cahi (Yanhuitlan) and the Mapa de Chiyo Cahnu (Teozacualco). Speaking about it as a *golden* bell underlines the precious character of communal life. Stories that refer to this object as being lost are clear examples of a reflection on the erosion of communal identity under the regime of colonial powers and modernity. We notice here the ongoing narrative agency and symbolic creativity under colonial oppression.

El Rebozo de mi Madre starts with a return to the village for *Todos Santos* or *Días de los Muertos* ('All Saints' or 'Days of the Dead'), which functions as a (re)integration ritual of the family, bringing together the living and the deceased. The importance of ancestors and the reflection on what they left us is much more relevant in Mesoamerican tradition than in Western Christian practice (in which the dead are usually excluded and not supposed to interact with the living). Burrials, therefore, are not mere depositories, but locales of meeting with the dead, who are now part of the Other World. This conceptualisation determines most of the visual art found in tombs. The decipherment of Maya hieroglyphic texts has uncovered rituals aimed at a visionary encounter with Ancestors, who manifest themselves as 'vision serpents'.

The Ñuu Dzaui historical codices inform *qualitate qua* mainly about the deceased *iya* and *iyadzehe*, who after death become *ñuhu*, 'deities'. This may be one of the reasons these books are referred to as 'sacred deerskins' (*ñee ñuhu*). The Ancestors naturally become part of the landscape, the memory of their acts being connected to specific spots (and sometimes monuments) and they themselves being burried in special places. An example is the cited case of the Valley of Yuta Tnoho in Codex Tonindeye (Nuttall), p.

36. Here we see Lord 5 Wind 'Rain' (or: 'Mixtec') marrying Lady 9 Alligator. Both are seated on the main toponym: Yuta Tnoho (Apoala), painted as 'Plucking River'. Lady 9 Alligator was the daughter of the elderly Lord 1 Flower and Lady 13 Flower, seated on the second – less important – river in the same valley. Probably they were local nobles. But, actually, this page is not about them. The two couples are just part of the landscape. The real historical scene is that of the four priests who walk in procession from the Waterfall to the Cave of the Serpent (*Yavui Coo Maa* at the entrance of the Valley of Yuta Tnoho) and continue from there a journey to other places to inaugurate new kingdoms.

Several Founding Ancestors of Ñuu Dzaui ruling lineages are qualified as being born out of concrete elements of Nature, such as trees, rivers, rocks or the land itself. Codex Ñuu Tnoo- Ndisi Nuu (Bodley), p. 1-IV, shows the First Father of the dynasty of Ñuu Tnoo (Tilantongo) being born from the Land of the Rain God.

The Ancestors are not only manifest in the geographical reality but also in the ritual cycle. Each of the defunct rulers has a calendar name, which had symbolic and divinatory connotations, and connected the commemoration of the Ancestor to a special 'ceremonial day of the dead' (*huico ndeye*). Invocation and other ritual performances brought them back in the middle of their descendants and devotees, in a way comparable to the present-day syncretistic celebration of *Todos Santos*. This was and is not the only ritual, of course. As the study by Hans-Jörg Witter (PhD dissertation in progress) indicates, there is a fascinating syncretism in the liturgical calendar, which situates the Christian focus on Easter in the context of rituals related to Rain, culminating with the feasts of the Holy Cross (May 3), exactly half a year after *Todos Santos*.

El Rebozo de mi Madre shows glimpses of Carnaval, which has become a ritual that mocks the enemies of the community. It has an interesting internal stratigraphy. From the Catholic perspective, imposed in the colonial time, the enemies were the Wild men (i.e. the 'primitives' who had to be civilized by the European colonizers) and the 'Old Ones' (now called *Chilohlo*, 'the toothless'), i.e. caricatures of the traditional native population. Nowadays modern figures are added, varying from Mexican presidents to Bush and Bin Laden.

Not present in the movie, but very important in the daily political life of the village is the people's assembly. Leadership is conceived as the ability of bringing together the people and mobilizing their forces for common goals. Many meetings in the codices can be understood this way. New rulers are acclaimed as such by the noble representatives of their community and neighboring towns. Examples are Codex Añute (Selden), p. 3-III – p. 4-III, where the first king of Añute (Jaltepec) is inaugurated, and Codex Tonindeye (Nuttall), pp.54- 68, where Lord 8 Deer receives the allegiance of no less than 112 dignitaries. In a more religious, even 'archetypical' discourse, Codex Yuta Tnoho (Vindobonensis), p. 48, shows Lord 9 Wind 'Quetzalcoatl', or rather *Koo Sau*, receiving the symbols of authority (staff of rulership) and devotional responsibilities (temples) from the Old Ones (Ancestors). Later he meets with different Spirits in order to consult about the acts of creation (*ibid*. p. 47, p. 38): even the divine powers adjust themselves

to the age-old custom of collective decision-making.

The opening scene of the early colonial Codex Yodzo Cahi (Yanhuitlan) shows an assembly organized in front of the *aniñe* (palace) of the town. The meeting is headed by the *iya* (Lord 9 House), seated on the frieze with step-fret motif, which is the sign of *ñuu*, 'town'. This suggests that this central role of the native political structure was played out in the plazas in front of monumental buildings. A same role may be attributed to large rooms within the buildings of the ceremonial center. An interesting detail in this codex scene is the positioning of the assistants at the assembly, for which the painter merges Mesoamerican and European conventions. The perspective of the beholder looks at the back of those who listen to the *cacique*: in this way 'we' are included among them and become part of the event.

Power

An important element of contemporary Mixtec spiritual life, mentioned several times in *El Rebozo de mi Madre*, is the dream- experience of transforming into an animal or natural phenomenon. Such an animal is known as *nahual* in Mexico and glossed '*alter ego*' by anthropologists. This is not a matter of great mysticism, but a quite normal, quotidian experience, which forms a central part of the Mesoamerican worldview (but was / is also present in other pre-industrial cultures). It connects people with the landscape and the Forces of Nature in a personal experiential way. Today the associations of this idea are generally positive. The *nahual* animals help the Forces of Nature, for example, in collecting water for the beginning of the rainy season. The *nahuales* also defend the lands of the community against invading outsiders or hostile neighbors.

In Mesoamerican art we see that rulers are often represented in animal outfits, which, in this cultural context, clearly point to powerful *nahuales* such as jaguar, eagle, fire serpent etc. This convention is already present in the classic iconography of the Ñuiñe style: a jaguar climbing a mountain is the ruler taking possession of his realm. One might see such an image as awe-inspiring or even terrifying, but probably the message is simply that the ruler is dedicating all his forces to protect and defend the community. Codex Vindobonensis, p. 48, shows Lord 9 Wind, the Plumed Serpent, having two *nahuales*: the eagle (*yaha*) and the fire serpent (*yahui*), which together form a *difrasismo*, translated in the 16th Century Mixtec grammar of friar Antonio de los Reyes as '*nigromántico señor*'. Clearly, this expression refers to visionary power, the nahualistic ability to fly (at day as an eagle, at night as a ball of fire).

Present-day practice and mentality suggest that Ñuu Dzaui tradition considers authority as a heavy responsibility, a *cargo* to be fulfilled with religious devotion and social ethos. Monuments and funerary representations – ranging from the impressive royal statue at Huamelulpan and the carved slabs of Nopala to the stucco mural decorations of Tomb I at Zaachila – show the ancient kings often with crossed armes, i.e. as being devote and humble. This contrasts with the modern current in archaeology that stresses

the economic base of social stratification and points toward self-interest and search for prestige as the rulers' prime motivations, which then produce strategies of controling the natural resources. Such models are uncritically and anacronically proyecting a modern 'capitalist logic' back into the past. In those days, however, by lack of money economic accumulation could not be so easily achieved, and must have been much less of a goal or pursuit than it is now. The indigenous conceptualisation suggests that exchange as an investment in social relations played a major part. Vertical economy is first and foremost not about control of strategic areas, but about opportunities for complementary exchange, both as barter in the market place and as gift-giving or feasting at ceremonial occasions (see Hernández Sánchez, this volume). Reciprocity, the *dzaha* (now often referred to as *gueza* from the Zapotec *guelaguetza*), was and is the cement of human sociality. Many rituals celebrate precisely the construction and continuation of communal life. An egocentric manipulative ruler would not survive long in such a social reality.

Final observation

El Rebozo de mi Madre includes in its title the symbol *par excellence* of female agency. Reading this sign in relation to our overall cultural-historical project, it stands for an affective relationship with the past, a longing for the protection provided by the earlier generation, a connection with aspects such as memory and identity. At the same time, it is a reference to childhood and therefore connotes a Deleuzian concept of 'growth'.

In dealing with these aspects the movie does not strive for one central (dominant) narrative, nor does it take an essentialist position. On the contrary, it aims at the mosaic interlocking of many micro-narratives, which foregrounds people as subjects of small-scale human drama, with whom we can all identify. These principles are a valuable theoretical and methodological orientation for interpretating and publishing archaeological and historical data.

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Gabina Aurora Pérez Jiménez

Leyendo los Códices en Sahin Sau

En la antigüedad precolonial el paisaje fragoso y boscoso de Ñuu Sau (antiguamente Ñuu Dzaui), el '*País de la Lluvia*', o '*La Mixteca*', con sus impresionantes serranías y valles pequeños o laderas cultivables a lo largo de los arroyos, causó una fragmentación en diversas subáreas geo-políticas, cada una organizada en uno o más reinos diferentes, con su propia variante dialectal de la lengua mixteca. En la época colonial la variante dialectal de Yuku Ndaa o Tepozcolula, Dzaha Dzaui, obtuvo el status de un idioma estándar, una 'lingua franca', y fue estudiado por los frailes dominicos, quienes produjeron una gramática (fray Antonio de los Reyes) y un diccionario impresionante (fray Francisco de Alvarado), ambos publicados en 1593. El significado de Dzaha Dzaui es 'Lengua de la Lluvia'.

Para comprender los términos y textos antiguos – sean los documentos escritos en lengua mixteca durante la época colonial, sean los códices pictográficos precoloniales – hay que combinar y comparar analíticamente las obras de Alvarado y de los Reyes con la lengua hablada, viva. Hoy en día existen muchas variantes dialectales, según algunos investigadores alrededor de treinta, según Smith-Stark (1995) hasta cincuenta y dos. Aquí me referiré a mi propia variante, el Sahin Sau, que es la que hablamos en Chalcatongo y que es representativa de la parte sur-occidental de la Mixteca Alta.[1]

Términos y desciframientos claves

Naturalmente podemos describir la civilización precolonial, su organización social, su religion y sus relatos históricos de manera precisa, adecuada y auténtica en la propia

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[1] Esta variante ha sido descrita y estudiada por varios autores: Dyk y Stoudt (1973) han hecho un vocabulario esencial, Macaulay (1996) una gramática, mientras que Faraclas (1983) e Hinton *et al*. (1991) han comentado sobre los tonos. La variación dialectal ha sido estudiada por Josserand en su disertación (1983). Para el seminario de lengua y cultura mixteca en la Universidad de Leiden he elaborado un curso basado en textos grabados en la región (Pérez Jiménez 2003): este curso es accesible a través de la página web de la Facultad de Arqueología de la misma universidad. Junto con Michael Swanton estoy realizando un estudio más detallado del léxico, de los tonos y de la gramática del Sahin Sau, con el apoyo de la Fundación Neerlandesa para el Fomento de Investigaciones Científicas (NWO) y de la Facultad de Arqueología de la Universidad de Leiden.

lengua mixteca. Empleo aquí el Sahin Sau, traduciendo a veces términos antiguos tomados del vocabulario de Alvarado (1593) a esta variante moderna.

Cada uno de reinos antiguos – *ñuu teyu*, 'pueblo, trono' o *yuu teyu*, 'petate, trono' – era una unidad autónoma, una nación de ámplios recursos y de una civilización refinada, con su propio gobernante hereditario.[2] Elementos importantes en la comunidad soberana de aquel entonces, que siguen vigentes en la actualidad, son la reciprocidad, el trabajo comunitario y la fe. Los títulos originales de los reyes y reinas eran *iha*, 'Señor', e *iha sihi*, 'Señora', términos que implican un gran respeto, ya que se aplicaban (y se aplican) también a los seres divinos.[3] Hoy en día *Iha sihi* es la Virgen María; el término *iha* se usa para los Santos.

La historia antigua de nuestras comunidades con sus linajes gobernantes de *iha* e *iha sihi* se relata en manuscritos pictóricos, los *ñii ñuhu*, 'pieles sagradas', hoy en día conocidos como 'códices'. Entre los temas narrativos más tratados está la epopeya del Señor 8 Venado 'Garra de Jaguar', que llegó a ser rey de Ñuu Tuun (antiguamente Ñuu Tnoo, ahora Santiago Tilantongo) y de la Señora 6 Mono 'Virtud de la Serpiente Emplumada', princesa del pueblo vecino Añiti (antiguamente Añute, ahora Magdalena Jaltepec). La primera parte de sus nombres refiere al día de su nacimiento, de acuerdo con el calendario mesoamericano precolonial. Para designar los días los sabios antiguos empleaban términos especiales, que conocemos por los documentos del siglo XVI. No sabemos cuáles tonos tenían. Así el día y nombre calendárico 8 Venado se dice *Nacuaa* en vez de *una isu* (que sería 'ocho venados') y 6 Mono es *Ñuñuu* en vez de *iñu koso* ('seis monos').[4] En transcripciones modernas de los códices puede ser útil, sin embargo, utilizar los términos del mixteco común para facilitar la comprensión del lector. La segunda parte del nombre de un individuo fue su 'nombre dado' Podemos reconstruir estos nombres del Señor 8 Venado y de la Señora 6 Mono en Dzaha Dzaui, el mixteco antiguo, como *Teyusi Ñaña* o *Teyusi Cuiñe* ('Garra de Jaguar') y *Dzico Coo Ndodzo* o *Dzico Coo Yodzo*, 'Virtud de la Serpiente Emplumada' respectivamente.[5] Otros perso-

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[2] Esta unidad política es generalmente designada como 'cacicazgo', 'señorío', 'ciudad-estado' o 'aldea-estado' en la literatura. Véanse sobre este particular los estudios de Spores 1967, Jansen 1994 y Terraciano 2001.

[3] Hoy día escribimos el Sahin Sau con el alfabeto español. Advertimos que el esta lengua distingue entre vocales cortas (a) y largas (aa) y que tiene una 'sexta vocal', la /i/, que se pronuncia con la lengua en la posición para decir /u/ y con los labios en la posición para decir /i/.

[4] La palabra *koso*, 'mono', ya no se usa en la Mixteca Alta (donde no viven monos), pero se puede reconstruir a base de la palabra *ticodzo*, registrada en el Vocabulario de Alvarado.

[5] El elemento central del nombre del Señor 8 Venado aparece como uña enjoyada en el Códice Iya Nacuaa (Colombino-Becker), que nos motiva a leerlo como *teyusi*, que significa 'uña' en el lenguaje de los señores, reportado por fray Antonio de los Reyes (1593), y a la vez contiene la palabra *yusi*, 'joya'. El antiguo término *dzico* significa tanto 'huipil' como 'virtud'; de ahí que el nombre de la Señora 6 Mono se pinta como 'Quechquemitl de Serpiente con Plumas' pero se interpreta como 'Virtud (o Poder) de la Serpiente Emplumada'.

najes importantes en la historia son la Señora 9 Hierba, *Quecuañe* (ɨɨn Yuku en el Sahin Sau común), la Dueña de la cueva fúnebre, y el Señor 11 Viento, *Siichi* (ushi ɨɨn Tachi), quien se casó con la Señora 6 Mono.

Según los cálculos cronológicos actuales, el Señor 8 Venado vivía de 1063 a 1115 d.C. y fue el único rey que logró unificar gran parte de Ñuu Sau. Su fama fue enorme y su vida parece haber sido tema de obras literarias y teatrales. Ya el primer intérprete del Códice Iya Nacuaa I (Colombino), el maestro Abraham Castellanos, se percataba del aspecto poético, hasta místico, de este relato.

Posteriormente investigadores como James Cooper Clark, Herbert Spinden, Alfonso Caso y especialmente Nancy Troike (1974) han contribuido a la lectura de las escenas de su vida en los diversos manuscritos (véase también A. Joyce *et al*. en este volumen). Junto con Maarten Jansen he presentado una interpretación de los datos de su biografía en los códices Yuta Tnoho (Vindobonensis) reverso, Tonindeye (Nuttall), Añute (Selden), Ñuu Tnoo – Ndisi Nuu (Bodley) e Iya Nacuaa (Colombino-Becker). Nuestros comentarios están basados no sólo en los estudios de investigadores anteriores sino también en un esfuerzo propio de relacionar las escenas pictográficas con las fuentes históricas y con la realidad actual de Ñuu Sau.[6] Muy importante para nosotros fue la lectura de los libros antiguos en la lengua viva, de acuerdo con las tradiciones culturales y los conceptos del pueblo Ñuu Sau.

Reconstruimos la lectura de los códices a partir de una interpretación de varios momentos cruciales del relato pintado en ellos.

La visita del Señor 8 Venado y de la Señora 6 Mono al Templo de la Muerte representa su ida al *Vehe Kihin* (antiguamente: *Huahi Cahi*), una cueva fúnebre que en el presente se considera la morada de un ser maligno, donde gente ambiciosa va a vender su alma en cambio de dinero y poder. En la antigüedad parece haber sido una entrada al Inframundo para consultar a los ancestros difuntos y pedir su ayuda, pero, al igual como se concibe hoy en día, un lugar muy peligroso y fatal. Tales cuevas hay en muchas partes pero pudimos identificar la cueva específica que se menciona en los códices como el 'Panteón de los reyes mixtecos' en el reino de Ñuu Ndeya (Chalcatongo). Según la descripción detallada de fray Francisco de Burgoa (1934, I, pp.337-341), esta cueva se ubicaba en el Cerro de los Cervatillos. Efectivamente, el Templo de la Muerte se asocia con un Cerro de Venado en el Códice Añute (Selden), p. 7. A la vez hemos demostrado que Ñuu Ndeya es representado en los códices como Ciudad de la Muerte, de acuerdo con la etimología de su forma antigua, Ñuu Ndaya (de *Andaya*, 'Infierno'). Así aparece, por ejemplo, en el Lienzo de Yucu Satuta (Zacatepec).

Las escenas de la boda de la Señora 6 Mono en el Códice Añute, pp.7-8) tienen muchas correspondencias con la costumbre matrimonial de hoy en día (tal como se representa también en la película *El Rebozo de mi Madre*): el baile, el baño prenupcial, el conteo de la ropa, el cargar a la novia a la casa de su futuro esposo, y la limpia con la 'hierba del borrachito' (*ita yisi*). Maarten Jansen logró identificar a los dos hombres que pararon el cortejo nupcial de la Señora 6 Mono como sacerdotes de Zaachila (in: Jansen, Kröfges & Oudijk 1998). Desde las lomas de Yucu Yoo y Tiyuqh, 'Cerro de la Luna' y 'La Moscadera', que forman parte del conjunto de gran sitio de Monte Albán, cerca de Oaxaca, ellos pretendieron parar el cortejo de la princesa con gritos. Sobre las volutas del habla se pintaron cuchillos de pedernal, lo que permite la lectura precisa de sus palabras: *yuchi yuchi*, 'cuchillo, cuchillo'. He interpretado esta frase como una expresión conocida en Sahin Sau, que significa: 'morirás por un cuchillo'. Este desciframiento a su vez nos demuestra el carácter dramático del relato. La princesa interpretó esas palabras como una amenaza y mandó a capturar y ejecutar a los dos sacerdotes. Pero en vista de que este matrimonio más tarde efectivamente causaría la muerte violenta de la Señora 6 Mono, nos damos cuenta de que estamos frente a un caso de ironía trágica (cf. Jansen & Pérez 2000).

Algunos han interpretado la escena en que el Señor 12 Movimiento, el medio-hermano mayor del Señor 8 Venado, muere en un *ñihin*, 'baño de vapor, temazcal', como un sacrificio humano. Una inspección más precisa, que compara el dibujo con la práctica conservada hasta hoy, sin embargo, clarifica que se trata de un asesinato sacrílego: el asesino había escondido su cuchillo entre las ramas del *ita ñihin*, las hojas que el curandero normalmente usa para pegar el vapor sobre el cuerpo de la persona que se baña (cf. Vriese 2006).

Estas observaciones y lecturas fueron el punto de partida para una breve película, *Ocho Venado y Seis Mono*, dirigida por Itandehui Jansen (Oaxaca Film Commission 1997). Este documental se realizó por encargo de la Secretaría de Turismo del Estado de Oaxaca, pero no fue distribuido. Su concepto central fue contar la historia dramática de estas dos personas con imágenes de los paisajes y vivencias actuales de Ñuu Sau, que explican, junto con el guión hablado, las escenas pictográficas de los libros precoloniales. De este modo se produce una ilustración de nuestro método de lectura, pero a la vez una identificación del relato ancestral con el pueblo y su cultura.

El discurso ceremonial

No cabe duda de que la lectura antigua de los códices fue realizada durante eventos de carácter ritual, importantes para la dinastía y la comunidad, y que, por lo tanto, se empleaba para ella el lenguaje típico de la literatura mesoamericana: el discurso ceremonial, llamado 'parangón' en español y *shahu* en Sahin Sau (véase también López García, este volumen). Su pronunciación es cuidadosa, expresando que lo que se dice procede de la tradición y de una reflexión especial, por lo que tiene la autoridad correspondiente.

El estilo solemne que es característico del *shahu* se construye principalmente por el uso de paralelismos y expresiones metafóricas.

Un paralelismo consiste en dos oraciones consecutivas o dos partes consecutivas de una oración, que son construidas gramaticalmente de la misma manera, es decir tienen una secuencia similar de palabras: 'hablar en pares'. Además las palabras en cuestión suelen tener un significado similar.

El difrasismo es un caso especial del paralelismo, en que la combinación de dos términos genera un nuevo significado, generalmente más abstracto. Garibay lo ha definido el difrasismo como elemento de la literatura nahuatl:

> ... consiste en armonizar la expresión de un mismo pensamiento en dos frases que, o repiten con diversas palabras la misma idea (sinonímico), o contraponen dos pensamientos (antitético), o completan el pensamiento agregando una expresión variante, que no es pura repetición (sintético) (Garibay 1971, I: 65).

> Ejemplos típicos de difrasismos mesoamericanos son:
> petate, asiento: 'gobierno, nación' (*petlatl icpalli* en nahuatl, *yuvui tayu* en dzaha dzaui),
> agua, monte: 'comunidad' (*altepetl* en nahuatl, *yucu nduta* en dzaha dzaui),
> agua, fuego: 'guerra' (*atl tlachinolli* en nahuatl, *nduta ndecu* en dzaha dzaui).

Naturalmente esta figura literaria domina los textos mesoamericanos de contenido profundo. Un primer ejemplo ilustrativo es el *Popol Vuh*, libro sagrado de los K'iche' en Guatemala (véase el análisis de Edmonson 1971). Lo mismo observamos en el relato mixteco de la creación, que fue registrado por fray Gregorio García (Libro V, cap. 4). Este último texto sólo se conserva en español, pero aún así conserva la estructura característica del discurso ceremonial:

> En el año y en el día
> de la oscuridad y tinieblas,
> antes que hubiese días ni años,
> estando el mundo en gran oscuridad,
> que todo era un caos y confusión,
> estaba la tierra cubierta de agua:
> sólo había limo y lama
> sobre la faz de la tierra.[7]

También el Códice Yuta Tnoho podemos observar la presencia dominante de este género literario (Anders, Jansen y Pérez Jiménez 1992). Y hasta hoy se usan estos difrasismos en ocasiones especiales. Ejemplos del Sahin Sau contemporáneo son:

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7 Para un análisis más amplio de este texto en el contexto de la literature mixteca, véase Jansen & Pérez Jiménez 2000.

ndɨɨ kɨu ndɨɨ ñuu	todos los días, todas las noches (siempre)
kuaha jiin yuu, jiin yunu	dar con la piedra, con el palo (castigar)
sehe ndahu, sehe kee	el hijo pobre, el hijo triste (el humilde)
yɨkɨ ndee, yɨkɨ ndanu	el hueso fuerte, el hueso vigoroso (la fuerza corporal)
vindaa vinene	con justicia y harmonía (vindaa = de veras)

Incluyo como muestra del estilo respetuoso del discurso ceremonial un texto pronunciado por un 'embajador de casamiento', quien viene para pedir la mano de una joven a sus padres y abuela:

Ja ndeduuni jiin nana ñahnu,	En cuanto a ambos Ustedes, con la señora grande,
veyna nuuni,	vengo ante Ustedes.
nikanachuhuntu	Me enviaron
ɨn ñayiu ndahu naha	algunas personas humildes
ɨn toho ja veyna vekahanna jiinni	(como) persona que vengo a hablar con Ustedes,
te ja nikakutahuni	ya que Ustedes obtuvieron (como favor)
ɨn ndɨkɨ yava ɨn ndɨkɨ tata	una semilla sembrada, una semilla fina (una hija),
nuu ndaha nuu jahani,	a sus manos a sus pies de Ustedes,
jiin nana ñahnu.	con la señora grande.
Te ja uan nikanachuhuntu	Y por eso me enviaron
toho ndahu uan	aquellas personas humildes,
ja veyna vekatuhunna nihi,	para venir a preguntar a Ustedes mismos
ɨn Yoshi maani.	(como) a Dios mismo.
Sandee sakahnu-inini.	Tengan corazón fuerte y grande (calma, paciencia).

Normalmente observamos en combinaciones de palabras el efecto de la melodía de la oración, un fenómeno lingüístico conocido como *sandhi*, que en Sahin Sau significa concretamente que el último tono de la primera palabra puede transformar el patrón tonal de la segunda palabra (Faraclas 1983). Generalmente se trata de combinaciones de un sustantivo y un adjetivo (*Ñuu Tuun*, 'Lugar Negro') o de dos sustantivos en una relación directa (*Yuku Saa*, 'Cerro de Pájaros'). Pero en el caso de paralelismos y difrasismos la pronunciación lenta y solemne tiene como consecuencia que no se aplica este *sandhi*. Compárense, por ejemplo, los siguientes casos:

kɨu kuiyá	'el día del año' (connexión normal, con *sandhi*)
kɨu, kuiyà	'el día, el año', es decir 'el tiempo' (difrasismo, sin sandhi).

El ritmo cinematográfico moderno, más aún en un documental corto, implica una velocidad que no combina muy bien con tal estilo solemne y repetitivo. De ahí que trabajando en el guión de la película *Ocho Venado y Seis Mono* optamos por no crear un discurso ceremonial, sino nos limitamos a presentar una lectura sumaria de lo esencial del relato. Observamos, sin embargo, que también en textos cortos el Sahin Sau tiene una gran potencialidad para expresar emoción y dramatismo.

El guión de la película 'Ocho Venado y Seis Mono'

La primera versión del guión de *Ocho Venado y Seis Mono* fue creada y escrita por Itandehui Jansen en español a base de nuestras lecturas anteriores de los códices. Luego traduje este texto al Sahin Sau, haciendo varias adapaciones. Trabajando así conjuntamente este guión en Sahin Sau, el propio medio narrativo, la cinematografía, nos ayudó a comprender mejor varios aspectos dramáticos de esta historia.

En primer lugar notamos que hay dos protagonistas: el Señor 8 Venado y la Señora 6 Mono, quienes comenzaron como una pareja joven (con las expectaciones y ambiciones correspondientes). La atrevida visita al *Vehe Kihin*, lugar oscuro, cargado de muerte y de fatalidad, terminó su incipiente relación y causó un desenlace trágico. Luego, la alianza posterior del Señor 8 Venado con el poderoso y enigmático Señor 4 Jaguar de Tollan connecta a esta historia con el gran ciclo épico del 'Quetzalcoatl histórico', rey de los toltecas (cf. Jansen 2006).

La directora ancló la línea narrativa en dos puntos clave de nuestra cultura. La película comienza con una anciana sabia que enciende el temazcal – referencia al nacimiento de un niño (en este contexto: de los protagonistas) y a la vez al poder de *Nanañuu*, 'la Abuela', quien es la Dueña del temazcal y la Patrona de la continuidad de la vida.

Así, en el contexto de nuestra herencia cultural como valor conservado y compartido en el presente, recontamos, a base de los antiguos manuscritos, pero de manera breve y sin pretensión literaria, la historia del Señor 8 Venado y de la Señora 6 Mono como un guión en Sahin Sau.

Yaha kuu tuhun ja kahan ndesa niyaa Iha Nacuaa

Este es el relato que dice cómo vivió el Señor 8 Venado:

Taa Iha Nacuaa nikuu Iha Sutu ñahnu Ñuu Tuun,
niyaka uu ñahasɨhɨ.
Iha Nacuaa nikuu sehe jiin ñasɨhɨ uu Iha Sutu,
nijahnu unuu jiin ñani kahnu te jiin kuaha kahnu.
    El padre del Señor 8 Venado fue el el Sumo Sacerdote de Tilantongo,
    tuvo dos mujeres.
    El Señor 8 Venado fue el hijo de la segunda mujer del Señor Sacerdote,
    creció junto (igual) con su medio hermano y su media hermana.
Ñuu Tuun nikuu shini ñuu tonɨñɨ Ñuu Sau.
Niyoo yahu kahnu nɨɨ Ñuu Sau
Nijaa kuia ja nikanakuatahan te tu ndeu tɨɨn shini ñuu;
nijihi ndoso uan, suchika sehe yii
ja ndoo tɨɨn shini ñuu.
    Tilantongo era la cabecera real de La Mixteca.
    Tuvo un mercado grande, de toda La Mixteca.
    Vino el año que hicieron guerra y no (hubo) quien tomara posesión de la cabecera;

murió el gran rey allí; el hijo [infante] (estaba) demasiado joven
para que se quedara a tomar posesión de la cabecera.

Nijahnu Iha Nacuaa. Tu nikajini nou saha jinahan.
Niyoo jayii ja nikanakuatahan jaha ñuu.

Creció el Señor 8 Venado. No supieron qué hacer.
Hubo hombres que pelearon por la ciudad.

Iha Nacuaa nisinu oko kuia, nijihi taayi
Suchi Nacuaa te nitava-ini ja nijandehe Ihasɨhɨ Quecuañe,
niyaa te nindito Vehe Kihin, ichi Ñuu Ndeya.

El Señor 8 Venado cumplió veinte años, (cuando) murió su padre.
Joven (fue) 8 Venado y decidió ir a ver a la Señora 9 Hierba,
(que) vivía en y cuidaba la Cueva Fúnebre, rumbo a Chalcatongo.

Yaha nikakunduji taka ndoso Ñuu Sau.
Yaha kakikakan shruhun ja nakuu kuka ñayiu,
ko nu nikajihi nakuaha anu nuu Vehe Kihin.

Aquí estaban enterrados todos los reyes antiguos de la Mixteca.
Aquí van a pedir dinero, para hacerse ricos la gente,
pero cuando mueren entregan el alma a la Cueva Fúnebre.

Iha Nacuaa tu nijahan maa ɨɨn Vehe Kihin uan,
niyaka jasɨhɨ suchi Ñuñuu jiin.
Nikandukoo ndenduu nuu Ihasɨhɨ Quecuañe,
sakuu ja nikatandaha.

El Señor 8 Venado no fue solo a aquella Cueva Fúnebre,
llevó a la joven muchacha 6 Mono con él.
Se sentaron ambos ante la Señora 9 Hierba,
como si estuvieran casados.

Nikajani-ini ja nihin ndenduu ɨn ñuu teyu kahnu.
Nikajani-ini ja kuu kusɨkɨ jiin maa jinahan.

Pensaron que obtendrían ambos un gran reinado.
Pensaron que pudieran jugar con su suerte.

Ko Ihasɨhɨ ñahnu Quecuañe sɨɨn nikahan jiin ndenduu:
'Roho Ñuñuu ma tandaharo jiin chaa yaha, tandaharo jiin kasade.
Te roho Nacuaa kihinro Ñuu Kahni uan, yoo ɨn ñuu teyu ja kuuro'.

Pero la gran Señora 9 Hierba habló diferente con ambos:
'Tú, 6 Mono, no te cases con este hombre, te casarás con su cuñado.
Y tú, 8 Venado, irás a la Costa allí; hay un reino para ti'.

Ndenduu nikandenda yau kava,
te nikanakihin sɨɨn sɨɨn ichi,
kuangoyo jinahan.

Ambos salieron de la cueva (de la peña)
y se fueron; tomaron cada uno diferente camino,
se fueron.

Iha Nacuaa nikee kuahan ichi Ñuu Kahni uan,
nijaa, nikeyaa ñuu teyu,
nindoo, ninduu ndoso ñuu teyu luli uan.

El Señor 8 Venado salió, se fue allí a la Costa,
llegó, quitó el reino,
se quedó, se volvió el rey de un pequeño señorío allí.

Te maa Ihasɨhɨ Ñuñuu ninakihin tuhun
Ihasɨhɨ ndito Vehe Kihin.
Nikastandaha Ihasɨhɨ Ñuñuu jiin Iha Siichi
Te yaha a nikuu toho ñahnu:
oko kuia niyaa jiin ñasɨhɨ nuu,
niyoo tɨnɨ sehe.

Y la Señora 6 Mono, por su parte, obedeció
a la Señora que cuida la Cueva Fúnebre.
Hicieron que se casara la Señora 6 Mono con el Señor 11 Viento.
Y este fue un hombre ya de edad:
veinte años vivió con su primera mujer,
(con quien) había tenido varios hijos.

Kuakuu kahnu ñuu teyu Iha Nacuaa,
ko niyaa ɨɨn, niyaa ndahu, niyaa kee,
 ñuhuni-ini Ihasɨhɨ Ñuñuu.
Tu ninaa-ini, tu ninduku ñasɨhɨ.

Llegó a ser grande el reinado del Señor 8 Venado,
pero (él) estaba solo, estaba triste y miserable,
estaba pensando en la Señora 6 Mono.
No la olvidó, no buscó mujer.

Nikandiso Ihasɨhɨ Ñuñuu ichi ñuu toho yii ja nitandaha jiinña,
te niyoo ɨn viko tandaha.

Cargaron a la Señora 6 Mono al pueblo del hombre que se casó con ella,
y hubo una fiesta del matrimonio.

Ihasɨhɨ Ñuñuu niyaa sɨɨ.
Iha Nacuaa ninduu ndoso Ñuu Kahni, Ñuu Yuku Saa.

La Señora 6 Mono estaba feliz.
El Señor 8 Venado se volvió el rey de la Costa, en la Ciudad de Tututepec.

Iha Nacuaa nisndoo Ñuu Tuun,
te tonɨñɨ yaha kuandɨhɨ.
Ndoso suchi ja ndoo tɨɨn ñuu
nijihi.

El Señor 8 Venado había dejado Tilantongo
y (más tarde) este rey terminó (este reinado llegó a su fin):
El joven rey que quedó para tomar posesión de la ciudad
(el príncipe heredero), murió.

Ñayiu Ñuu Kohyo ja kajanayaka tuhun
nikananduku Iha Nacuaa,
chi nikajini ja Iha Nacuaa shraan niskanitahan ñuu.
Te ndoso Ñuu Kohyo Quetzalcoatl
nijaha ɨn sikɨ luu, sikɨ ndaa nuu Iha Nacuaa
ja niyihi kutu,

chi suan nikayihi kutu taka ndoso.

    Gente de Tula que cargaban palabras (mensajeros toltecas)
    buscaron al Señor 8 Venado,
    porque supieron que el Señor 8 Venado era un gran guerrero.
    Y el gran rey de Tula, Quetzalcoatl
    dió una hermosa joya, una turquesa al Señor 8 venado,
    que lo llevó en su nariz (como nariguera),
    porque así lo llevan en su naríz todos los grandes reyes.

Iha Nacuaa kuanoho ñuu nuu nikaku
te ndɨhɨ toho ja kakuu ñahnu nikakinatahan,
nikakey jini ja maa ndoo kuu ndoso ñuu.

    El Señor 8 Venado regresó a la ciudad donde había nacido
    y todos los señores grandes fueron a su encuentro,
    le dijeron que él quedara y fuera el gran rey de la ciudad.

Ndenduu jiin ñani kahnu nikakuu ndoso Ñuu Sau,
nikatɨɨn shini ɨnga ñuu.
Suan nikakuu kuka, niyoo unuu,
nikayaa nuu vindaa vinene.

    Ambos, (él) con su hermano mayor, fueron grandes reyes de la Mixteca,
    tomaron posesión de otras cabeceras.
    Así (los habitantes de la región) estuvieron ricos, hubo igualdad (unidad),
    vivieron un rato en tranquilidad y paz.

Quetzalcoatl ndoso Ñuu Kohyo nisndukuin ñayiu
* ja nakuatahan ichi vehe kahnu nuu yaa Iha Ndikandii.*
Nikana Iha Nacuaa ja nakihin jiin te nikundii jiin.

    Quetzalcoatl, el gran rey de Tula levantó la gente
    a hacer guerra a la gran casa donde vive el Señor Sol.
    Llamó al Señor 8 Venado para que se fuera con él y estuviera con él.

Nikakee kuangoyo sɨkɨ nducha kahnu,
nuu kayaa chaca, tiyehe kahnu,
nuu yaa Koo Sau , tɨkacha,
nuu kanda kɨtɨ shraan koo kɨu.

    Salieron, se fueron sobre un gran lago,
    donde viven pescados, grandes conchas,
    donde vive la serpiente de la lluvia, el remolino,
    donde se mueve el animal bravo, el cocodrilo.

Nikajaa Ñuu Yoho Kuijin, Yoho Kuaha,
nikasaha yee ñuu uan.

    Llegaron a la Ciudad de la Cinta Blanca y Roja
    y se apoderaron de ese lugar.

Nikakɨu nuu yoo ii
nikajaa nuu ñuu nuu kayaa tuun,
nikakɨu yuhu yau sukunyuu
te nikajaa nuu Ñuu ndɨyɨ.

    Entraron en el ambiente sagrado,

llegaron al lugar donde viven los nahuales,
entraron por las fauces de la Serpiente de Fuego
y llegaron al Lugar de los Muertos.

Nikaitahan jiin ja kandito vehe kahnu Iha Ndikandii,
nikakundee jiin Vahu Niyii jiin Iha Ndɨyɨ.

Lucharon con los que cuidaban la casa grande del Señor Sol,
vencieron al Viejo Coyote y al Señor de los Muertos.

Iha Nacuaa jiin Quetzalcoatl nikakɨu
vehe ñuhu yuu kuii, vehe Iha Ndikandii,
nikasndoo ndua,
nikachiñuhu jiin yuu kuaan yuu luu nuu Iha Ndikandii.
Iha Ndikandii nijaha
ja nikanasnaha ñuhu jaa te nikachiñuhu tonɨñɨ.

El señor 8 Venado y Quetzalcoatl entraron
en el templo de piedras verdes (jade), la casa del Señor Sol,
depositaron sus flechas,
veneraron con piedras amarillas y piedras hermosas al Señor Sol.
El Señor Sol les dio (permiso)
que encendieran el fuego nuevo y consagraron su posición de reyes.

Iha Nacuaa ninajaa nuu Ñuu Tuun,
ninduu ñahnu shraan nuu ñuu,
ja key maa nikuu.
Ko tu niyoo sɨɨ ini, a nijaa uu shiko kuia te chahanga te tandaha.
Akuaa naskoto jani Ihasɨhɨ Quecuañe nuu.
Ndukuhun ini Ihasɨhɨ Ñuñuu.
Nikukuasun ini ja taka ñayiu kayaa sɨɨ.
Nijani-ini:
¿najaha kuantiun kahnuri jiin ñani kahnuri nuu ñuu teyu yaha?

El Señor 8 Venado regresó a Tilantongo,
se volvió muy grande en el pueblo:
lo que él dijo se hacía.
Pero no estaba feliz, ya llegó a los 40 años y todavía no se casaba.
En la noche se revelaba en sus sueños la Señora 9 Hierba a él.
Recuerda a la Señora 6 Mono.
Tenía envidia de que toda la gente estaba feliz.
Pensó:
¿porqué voy a gobernar con mi medio-hermano en este reino?

Ñani kahnu nijakaa ñihin.
Iha Nacuaa nichahu toho
nijaskaa ñihin ñani kahnu uan.

El medio hermano mayor se fue a bañar en el temazcal.
El Señor 8 Venado pagó al señor
que iba a bañar a su medio hermano en el temazcal.

Toho niskaa ñihin nichisey yuchi
mahñu ita ñihin,

te nijahni ndoso ja nikuu ñani kahnu Iha Nacuaa.

El señor que lo iba a bañar en el temazcal escondió un cuchillo
entre las hierbas del temazcal
y mató al gran rey que era el medio hermano del Señor 8 Venado.

Nikajayaka ita, nikajayaka suha, javishi,
nasaa nuu ja nikajayaka nuu nuñaña
ndoso ja nikajahni ini ñihin.
Kayatuhun ja ndeu nisaha kuachi shraan uan.

Le llevaron flores, chocolate, frutas,
varias cosas que le llevaron a él en su sepulcro,
del gran rey a quien habían asesinado en el temazcal.
La gente se pregunta quién hizo ese horrible crimen.

Shraan nikɨtɨ-ini Iha Nacuaa,
indeeni-ini Ihasɨhɨ Ñuñuu ñaha
ja ɨn kɨu nikajahan ndenduu Vehe Kihin.

Muy enojado estaba el Señor 8 Venado,
piensa solamente en la Señora 6 Mono,
la mujer que un día había ido con él a la Cueva Fúnebre.

Nichaa kuachi sɨkɨ tahan Iha Siichi jiin Ihasɨhɨ Ñuñuu
ja nikajahni ñani kahnu ini ñihin.

Culpó a la pareja Señor 11 Viento y la Señora 6 Mono
de que habían matado a su medio hermano en el temazcal.

Iha Nacuaa ninduku tatu ñayiu
ja nikajakahni Iha Siichi jiin Ihasɨhɨ Ñuñuu,
te nindoo jiin ñuu teyu;
suni nijahni ndenduu sehe-yiiya.

El Señor 8 Venado buscó y empleó gente
que mataran al Señor 11 Viento y a la Señora 6 Mono
y se quedó con su reinado;
también mató a sus dos hijos.

Sehe Ihasɨhɨ Ñuñuu nikakaku,
nducha nuu jaluli uan nisaha
ja nikundahu ini Iha Nacuaa
te tunuu nisaha jiinyi.
Te ñuu teyu ni asu ja kanuu nikuu.

Los hijos de la Señora 6 Mono se salvaron,
las lágrimas de esos pequeños
hicieron que se conmovió el Señor 8 Venado
y no hizo nada con ellos.
Y su reino ni siquiera era lo importante.

Sehesɨhɨ kahnu Ihasɨhɨ Ñuñuu nitɨɨn yihi,
nichindihu te uana nitandaha jiinña.

A la hija adoptiva de la Señora 6 Mono la agarró a la fuerza,
la encerró y así se casó con ella.

Uni ñasɨhɨ Iha Nacuaa niyoo te tɨni sehe niyoo,

ko tukuiti niyoo sii ini.
   Tres mujeres tuvo el Señor 8 Venado y varios hijos,
   pero no estaba nada feliz.
Nijaha kuia ja Iha Nacuaa tu niyaa vaha,
chi ja shraan nduvaha nisaha jiin taka ñuu taka teyu
te shraan nijihi ndiyi nisaha.
Iha Nacuaa nisinu uu shiko ushi uu kuia,
kuahan yuku nuu ñuhu iin ñasihi maa
te uan nikajahni: nindukava ja kuakusu.
   Pasaron los años, en que el Señor 8 Venado no vivía bien,
   porque había hecho muchas maldades con todos los reinos
   y había causado muchos masacres.
   El Señor 8 Venado cumplió 52 años,
   se fue a cazar en la tierra de una de sus esposas
   y allí lo mataron: estaba acostado para irse a dormir.
Sehe Ihasihi Ñuñuu jiin Iha Siichi nisaha ja uhu ini jiin,
chi ja suan nijahni taa naa.
   El hijo de la Señora 6 Mono y del Señor 11 Viento tomó su venganza,
   porque así él (Señor 8 Venado) había matado a su padre y madre.
Iha Nacuaa nikuu in ndoso ndichi nuu Ñuu Sau
Nikachindujiya nuu ñaa Vehe Kihin Ñuu Ndeya.
Shraan nikandehe jahaya,
nikachiñuhu jiin ita jiin susia kutu
te nikajoko yiti nuu nuñañaya.
   El Señor 8 Venado fue un gran rey inteligente de la Mixteca.
   Le enterraron en la oscuridad de la Cueva Fúnebre de Chalcatongo.
   Mucho lloraron por él,
   le veneraron con flores, con copal,
   y encendieron velas ante su tumba.

El fin de la película consiste de imágenes del Día de los Muertos: el altar decorado con los arcos y la comida, el copal, niños jugando en el panteón, un pájaro sobre una cruz, *papalotes*, un anciano pensativo... Es una celebración muy significativa de la cultura mesoamericana actual, en que recordamos a nuestros familiares difuntos y honramos a nuestros ancestros.

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Arthur A. Joyce, Andrew Workinger, Byron Hamann and Marc N. Levine

The Archaeology and Codical History of Tututepec

The site of Tututepec (Yucu Dzaa in Mixtec) has long been know from ethnohistoric sources as the capital of a powerful Late Postclassic (AD 1100-1522) imperial center in the lower Río Verde region on the Pacific coast of Oaxaca (Barlow 1949; Davies 1968; Smith 1973). Tututepec was one of several polities independent of the Aztec Empire and just prior to the Spanish Conquest was raiding towns as distant as Mitla, Achiutla, and Tehuantepec. The polity was ruled by a Mixtec dynasty, but controlled an empire extending over 25,000 km^2 (Figure 1) that included speakers of at least five other languages: Amuzgo, Chatino, Zapotec, Chontal, and Nahuatl (Spores 1993). The documentary record of Tututepec extends back to the late eleventh century as recorded in the Mixtec codices (Joyce et al. 2004a; Smith 1973).

Despite the recognized importance of Tututepec in the ethnohistoric record, until recently, little has been known of the archaeology of the site with its very location the subject of debate (Joyce et al. 2004a: 275-276; O'Mack 1990). This paper discusses the founding, extent, chronology, and aspects of the internal organization and external relations of Tututepec based on the results of a regional full-coverage survey, horizontal and test excavations, and a reanalysis of ethnohistoric documents (Joyce et al. 2004a, 2004b; Workinger 2002). We find a strong concordance between the archaeological and codical records that deal with Tututepec. The archaeological data indicate that the cacicazgo of Tututepec was founded early in the Late Postclassic by a highland Mixtec group. The foundation of Tututepec is further depicted in the heroic history of Lord 8 Deer 'Jaguar Claw.' While Tututepec disappears from the codical record after the death of Lord 8 Deer, the archaeological data as well as Early Colonial documents show that the city continued to expand as its leaders came to control an empire that extended over much of southern Oaxaca.

The Founding of Tututepec: History from Archaeology

Over the past 20 years the lower Río Verde Valley has been the focus of research that has begun to clarify the archaeology of Tututepec (Joyce 1991; 1993, 1999; Joyce et al. 2001, 2004a; Urcid and Joyce 2001; Workinger 2002). This research has included large-scale archaeological excavations at six sites as well as test excavations at 13 other sites
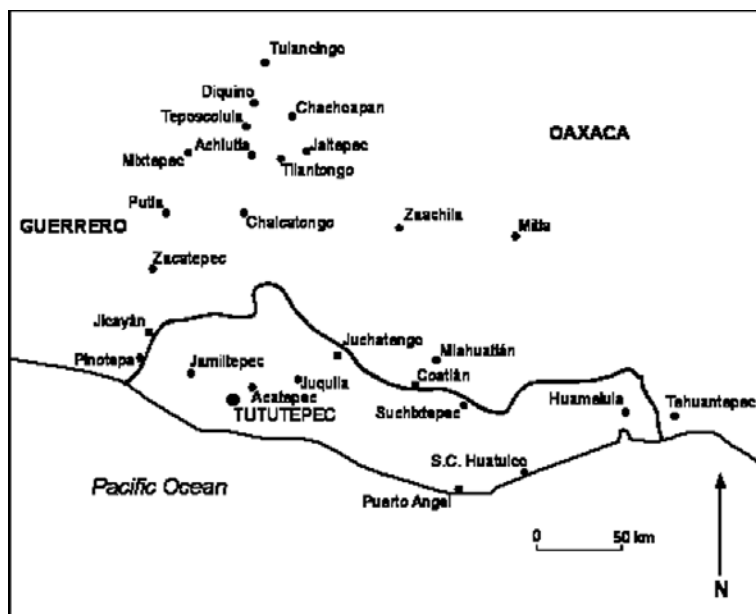
Figure 1. Map of the Tututepec Empire showing Sites Mentioned in the Text

and a full-coverage survey over 152 km^2. The survey zone included transects extending from the coast to the piedmont and covered most of ancient Tututepec, although due to time constraints a 1.5 km^2 area of the northeastern end of the site was not completely surveyed. Field methods followed general procedures used in other full-coverage surveys in Mesoamerica (e.g., Blanton 1978; Sanders et al. 1979).

The full-coverage survey in the lower Río Verde Valley found that the Late Postclassic site of Tututepec covers 21.3 km^2, making it one of the largest prehispanic sites by area in Mexico (Figure 2). The Late Postclassic component of San Francisco de Arriba is separated from Tututepec by only a 600 m strip that has been washed out by the Río San Francisco. Since the San Francisco drainage would not have been appropriate for settlement and because sites in the floodplain would not have been preserved, we suspect that the Late Postclassic component of San Francisco de Arriba was also part of Tututepec, which would bring the overall area of the site to 21.85 km^2. Three other sites clustered near the northeastern tip of Tututepec (RV150, RV151, RV153) may also represent outlying settlements, but were not included as part of Tututepec. A total of 168 surface collections were made at Tututepec proper with an additional 43 surface collections at the Late Postclassic component of San Francisco de Arriba. Workinger (2002) carried out large-scale excavations at San Francisco de Arriba and, in 2005 Marc Levine directed horizontal excavations of two Late Postclassic residences at Tututepec. The results of the full-coverage surveys and excavations as well as a reanalysis of the Mixtec codices provide a clearer picture of the origins and development of ancient Tututepec.
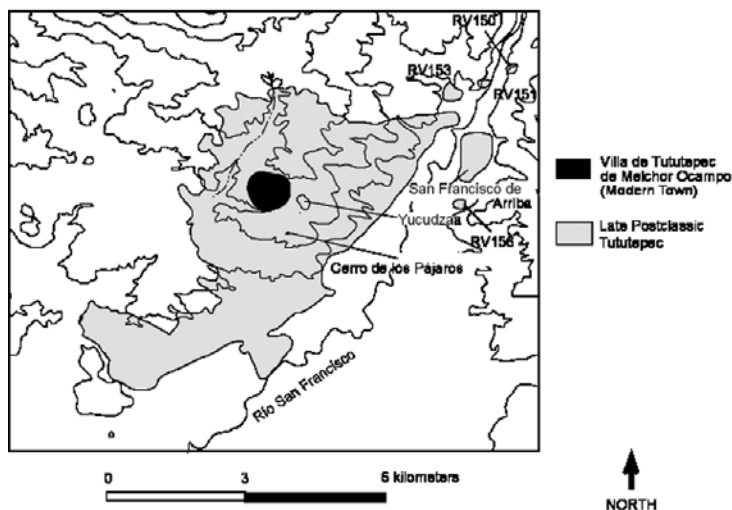
Figure 2. Survey map of ancient Tututepec and associated sites

The survey results show that settlement at Tututepec began in the Middle Formative (700-400 BC.) and continued through the Late Classic (AD 500-800). By the Early Postclassic (AD 800-1100), however, the site was nearly uninhabited with only 1 ha of settlement in the area that would become the Late Postclassic city. Elsewhere in the region, the Early Postclassic witnessed the collapse of the ruling institutions of the Classic Period Río Viejo state, the fragmentation of political centers, and warfare (Joyce et al. 2001). The period immediately preceding the rise of the Tututepec Empire was therefore characterized by political instability and conflict.

The almost complete absence of Early Postclassic settlement at Tututepec indicates that the Late Postclassic city did not develop out of an earlier community, but was founded instead as a new political center (Joyce et al. 2004a, 2004b). Ethnohistoric and linguistic sources indicate that the founding of Tututepec was the result of the immigration of Mixtec speaking peoples into the lower Verde at about AD 1100. At the time of the Spanish Conquest most people of the lower Río Verde were speakers of Mixtec as are most indigenous people in the region today. Linguistic studies by Josserand and her colleagues (1984: 154) suggest that the coastal Mixtec dialect probably originated in the highland region of San Juan Mixtepec. Glottochronological estimates suggest the coastal and highland dialects diverged around AD 900-1000 (Josserand et al. 1984: 154). Prior to the Postclassic relatively few cultural similarities are apparent between the lower Río Verde region and the Mixteca Alta and Baja regions (Joyce 1993; Winter 1989). This has led Joyce and Winter (1989) to suggest that before the Postclassic people in the lower Verde were not Mixtec, but may instead have been Chatino speakers. By the Late Postclassic, however, archaeological and ethnohistoric data indicate that Mixtecs were present in the lower Río Verde. Late Postclassic Yucudzaa Phase ceramic

and architectural styles in the lower Verde are very similar to those of the Mixteca Alta (Hutson 1996; O'Mack 1990). In addition, the Mixtec codices describe Tututepec as ruled by a Mixtec dynasty dating back to the late eleventh century (Smith 1973). Settlement data are consistent with massive immigration as the total occupational area in the survey zone increases from 452 ha in the Early Postclassic to 2315 ha by the Late Postclassic – a 512% increase.

The archaeological data therefore reveal a number of concurrent social changes taking place on the coast of Oaxaca during the Postclassic (Joyce et al. 2001, 2004a). These changes include the collapse of old social orders, an escalation of militarism, a reorganization of settlement patterns, the expansion of Tututepec from a small hamlet to a major urban center, population expansion possibly linked to the immigration of Mixtecs, and an increase in highland-lowland interactions. Intriguingly, all of these transformations are also attested in retrospective indigenous accounts of the same era. Painted around AD 1500, the Codices Nuttall, Bodley, and Colombino-Becker provide Mixtec perspectives on the social transformations of the early Late Postclassic Period on the Oaxaca coast. As is typical for Mixtec codical history – indeed, for genres of 'heroic history' in general – broad processes of social transformation are embodied in, and viewed as having been instigated by, a specific elite individual, in this case, Lord 8 Deer 'Jaguar Claw.' We now turn from archaeology to ethnohistory. We hope to show the ways in which these histories represent, and personify, broad social transformations that are registered in the archaeological record; these include, Mixtec immigration, coastal militarism, the expansion of Tututepec, and increased highland-lowland interactions.

The Founding of Tututepec: History from Codices

In arguing for a link between the textually-recorded actions of Lord 8 Deer and archaeologically-registered social transformations in the lower Río Verde Valley, we argue that the codical record can be read not simply as esoteric elite biography, but rather as 'heroic history' (Joyce et al. 2004a). Marshall Sahlins (1985: 35, 1991, 1994) argues that 'heroic history' is an 'anthropomorphic' mode of interpreting social process, in which the actions of structurally-central individuals (e.g., divine kings) are interpreted as having massive implications for their society as a whole. Such heroic agents are 'socio-historical individuals,' who reciprocally link a larger system with individual action. On the one hand, heroic agents are understood to embody larger social orders (Sahlins' instantiation). On the other, the actions of those agents are understood to have massive implications for the social system in which they are embedded (Sahlins' totalization). Our Oaxacan use of heroic history is focused on questions of instantiation: that is, how broad social transformations were understood through the actions of Lord 8 Deer. Since we are working with documents painted four centuries after the events they depict, it is difficult to make arguments about the actual totalizing effects of Lord 8 Deer's actions. For example, we cannot determine if his expedition to the coast was really what trig-

gered massive Mixtec migration. But such focused claims about the totalization of Lord 8 Deer's agency are not necessary for our argument. What is important is that sixteenth century Mixtecs understood the history of their presence on the coast as personified in an elite hero – and that we, now, can see how these biographical claims instantiate archaeologically-registered transformations. First, we consider the arrival of Lord 8 Deer and his followers on the coast (the instantiation of large-scale highland-to-lowland migration) and his foundation of Tututepec (the instantiation of the sudden expansion of the site). Then, we consider the implications of Lord 8 Deer's new position of rulership: his many conquests (the instantiation of increased coastal militarism) and his access to coastal tribute, his alliance with Lord 4 Jaguar, and his return to the highlands to become ruler of Tilantongo (the instantiation of increased highland-lowland trade interactions).

According to the codices, Lord 8 Deer 'Jaguar Claw' was born in the highland town of Tilantongo on the Day 8 Deer in the Year 12 Reed (AD 1063). He was the son of Lady 11 Water 'Blue Parrot' and Lord 5 Alligator 'Rain-Sun.' Although Lord 8 Deer would eventually become the ruler of both Tilantongo and Tututepec, neither of his parents had genealogical ties to the ruling families of either polity (contra Caso 1977: 147; see Joyce et al. 2004a: note 2). Instead, we argue that Lord 8 Deer's rulership at Tututepec was based not on the inheritance of an existing polity, but on the foundation of a new one. The fact that Lord 8 Deer was not eligible to inherit a kingdom of his own set the stage for his journey to the south coast of Oaxaca. When he was eighteen, Lord 8 Deer set out for the coast, a journey that the codices present as undertaken with the specific goal of founding a kingdom.

The Codices Nuttall, Bodley, and Colombino-Becker record somewhat different versions of this journey (Joyce et al. 2004a, 2004b). By comparing these accounts with polity-foundation stories from other codices, Lord 8 Deer's journey can be seen as part of a genre of 'foundation narratives' (Joyce et al. 2004a: 283). In other words, the codices present Lord 8 Deer as founding the city of Tututepec. The codices date this event to AD 1083, which closely parallels the archaeological record for the period of expansions of both Tututepec and the coastal population as a whole.

All three codical accounts of Lord 8 Deer's travel to the coast record an event, which occurred in AD 1083, on the Day 6 Serpent in the Year 6 Reed (Caso 1966: 123; Jansen and Pérez Jiménez 2005: 62). On this date, Lord 8 Deer consulted with the oracle Lady 9 Grass at her Chalcatongo shrine (Figure 3). The 'foundational' events that follow this meeting vary from codex to codex, but all three narratives come into alignment again with Lord 8 Deer's arrival at Tututepec. As the following discussion illustrates, Lord 8 Deer and his followers undertake three basic types of 'foundational' activities in their journey from the highlands to the coast. These are: 1) peregrinations with 'objects of authority and rulership;' 2) visitations of local places and local authorities on a 'journey of rulership recognition' (Furst 1986: 62; cf. García-Zambrano 1994: 219); and 3) demarcations of polity boundaries through ballcourt rituals (cf. García-Zambrano 1994: 219).

Figure 3. Codex Nuttall, Pages 44-47 (the sequence begins at the lower right hand corner of page 44 and then proceeds right to left; from Codex Zouche Nuttall 1987).

In the Nuttall account, Lord 8 Deer follows his meeting at Chalcatongo by performing a series of sacrifices and conquests (Figure 3). Then in an event, which looks ahead to Lord 8 Deer's future political career, he meets in a cave and in a ballcourt with a group of men wearing diagnostically 'Toltec' costumes. Following these meetings, the place sign of Tututepec, a bird's beak emerging from a stone hill, appears in the Codex Nuttall for the first time.

In the Bodley, Lord 8 Deer's meeting at Chalcatongo is followed by the conquest of River of the Mouth. Lord 8 Deer then presents himself before the rulers of the lowland site of Juquila located 35 kilometers northeast of Tututepec, which is indicated in the codices by a frieze with a hand holding a knot of feathers (Smith 1973: 75-76). After this visit, Lord 8 Deer is enthroned at the bird-headed-stone place sign of Tututepec.

In the Colombino-Becker account, Lord 8 Deer begins his journey to the coast by receiving a series of objects at Chalcatongo: an owl spear, a shield decorated with a skull, a fish, a conch shell, a vessel containing a bloody heart, and a warty tobacco gourd (Figure 4; Caso 1966: 124; Troike 1974: 130). Lord 8 Deer and his followers carry these objects along with a flint staff and a sacred bundle on their journey to the coast. They soon arrive at a series of six place signs, where Lord 8 Deer offers powdered tobacco. The first and last signs in this series are of the same location: Malinalli Hill (Caso 1966: 123). We argue that the remaining four signs (Hill Where the Ñuhu Emerges, Split Hill Dark Hill, River, and Temple of the Skull) represent the four corners of the Mixtec World since they correlate to the Mixtec cardinal points (Jansen 1982). After these directional offerings, Lord 8 Deer burns incense inside a ballcourt, perhaps a cognate to the ballcourt scene on page 45 of the Nuttall (Troike 1974; Figure 3). The ballcourt scene is followed by a procession of seven individuals, each carrying a sacred

Figure 4. Codex Colombino-Becker, Pages 3-6 (the sequence begins at the upper left hand corner of page 3, and then travels back and forth across two-page spans; from Codex Colombino 1893).

object. The seven arrive at the compound place sign of Tututepec-Juquila. Four of the objects carried from the highlands are then placed within the site's temple at the polity's symbolic center.

The codices, therefore, present Lord 8 Deer as an individual who performs rituals of foundation in the process of coming to the lower Verde region. Lord 8 Deer is presented as the founder of Tututepec and arrives on the coast as a political figure rather than as a priest like his father. Immediately following his arrival, the codices depict Lord 8 Deer conquering a series of places apparently to consolidate his power on the coast (Figures 3 and 4).

Lord 8 Deer was able to found a kingdom at Tututepec because of a combination of advantageous historical, political, economic, and ecological circumstances (Joyce et al. 2004a, 2004b). The archaeological record shows that at the end of the eleventh century the lower Verde region would have been vulnerable to outside conquest following the collapse of the Río Viejo state and the ensuing political fragmentation and unrest (Joyce et al. 2001).

Lord 8 Deer may have been pursuing a strategy designed to take advantage of the ecological verticality of a highlands-to-coastal corridor (Monaghan 1994). The lower Verde region was characterized by great agricultural productivity as well as a diversity of lowland resources that were valued by highland populations such as cacao, salt, quetzal feathers, cotton, and fish. The richness of the coast is specifically referenced in the Nuttall. Among the list of 25 places conquered by Lord 8 Deer in the Nuttall are four sites that may show places that, through compliance, became tributaries of Lord 8 Deer. These four place glyphs are not pierced by the spear of conquest, and they are accompanied by full-bodied human figures (Figure 3). Four of the six individuals associated with
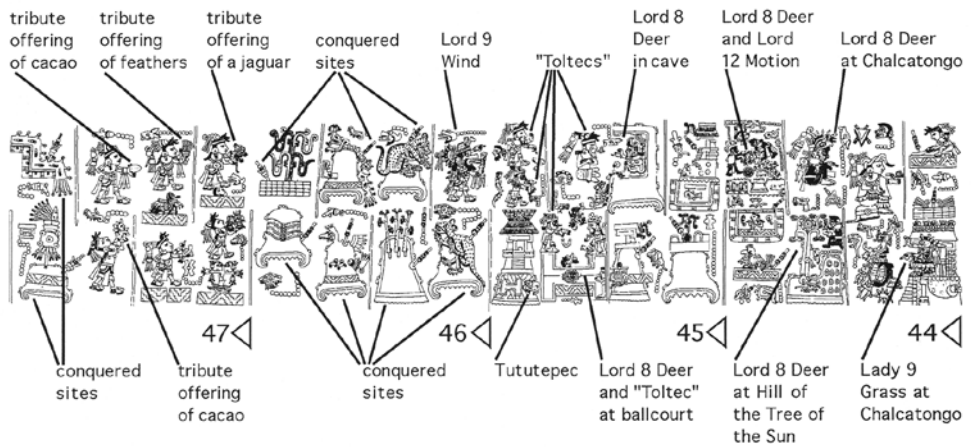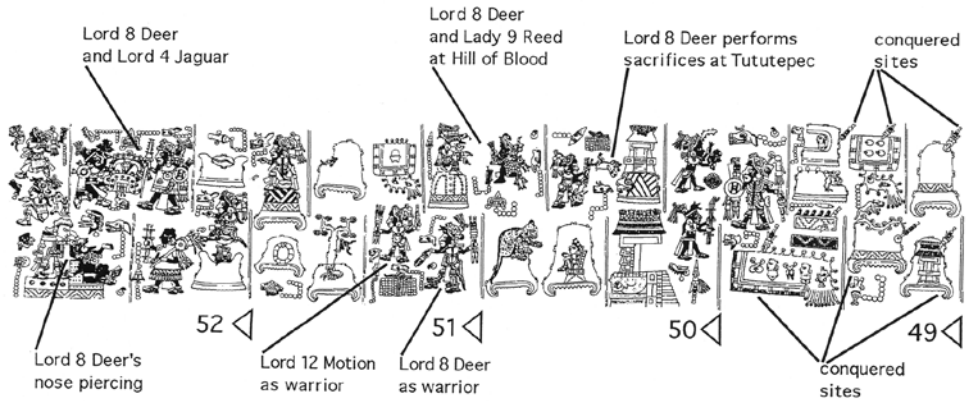
Figure 5. Codex Nuttal, Pages 49-52 (the sequence begins at the upper right hand corner of page 49, and then proceeds right to left; from Codex Zouche Nuttall 1987).

these places are shown holding objects specifically coded as the products of lowland tropical environments, including a jaguar, tropical feathers and two different forms of cacao. By gaining control over coastal resources, Lord 8 Deer would have become an attractive alliance and exchange partner for highland nobles. Access to coastal resources may have been a factor in Lord 8 Deer's establishment of an alliance with a powerful highland polity that contributed to his success in founding Tututepec and defeating local competitors.

This alliance was with a group of foreign travelers shown in the codices carrying fans and staves, the insignia of merchants, and wearing a distinctive black facemask that marks these individuals and their leader, Lord 4 Jaguar, as Tolteca-Chichimeca (Pohl 1994: 83-108). Versions of the alliance between Lord 8 Deer and Lord 4 Jaguar are recorded in the codices Nuttall, Colombino-Becker, and Bodley. For example, on page 45 of the Nuttall, a representative of Lord 4 Jaguar assists Lord 8 Deer in the ballcourt ritual he performs before founding Tututepec (Figure 3). The ballcourt scene is followed by the Tututepec place glyph, which is in turn approached by three men. The first two men are dressed as Toltecs, while the third man wears the full regalia of the Mixtec supernatural Lord 9 Wind. Lord 9 Wind is followed by a series of conquests. Following these events, on page 52 of the Nuttall, Lord 8 Deer and Lord 4 Jaguar are shown performing a sacrifice before a sacred bundle (Figure 5).

In all three codices the alliance is sealed by what is perhaps the most famous event depicted in the Mixtec codices, Lord 8 Deer's nose-piercing rite in AD 1097 (Figures 5 and 6). In this scene, Lord 4 Jaguar oversees a ritual where Lord 8 Deer's nasal septum is pierced and a turquoise jewel is placed in it, thereby investing Lord 8 Deer with the title of tecuhtli, designating membership in the Tolteca-Chichimeca royal house. Gaining
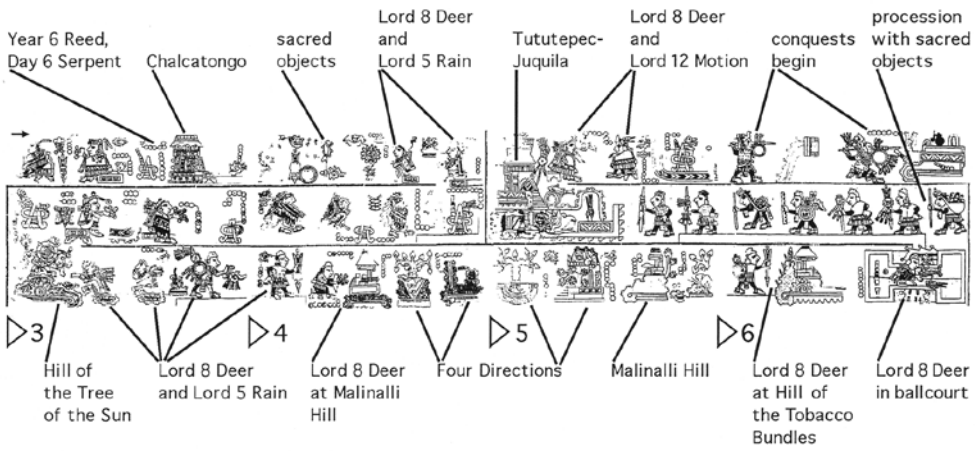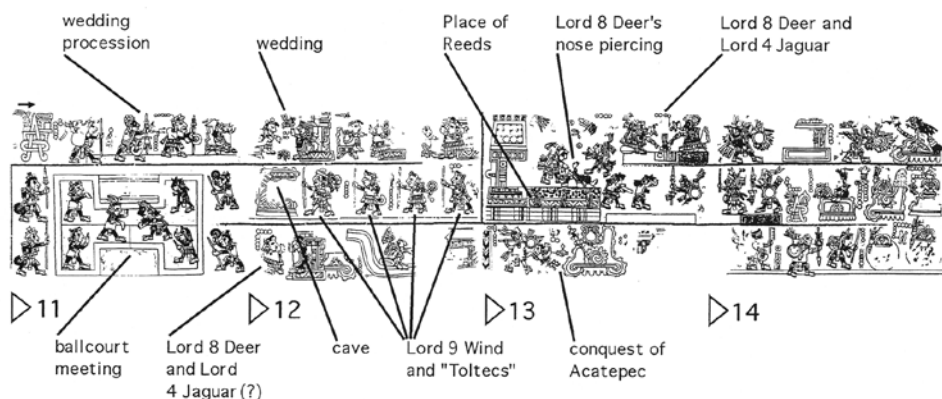
Figure 6. Codex Colombino-Becker, Pages 11-14 (the sequence begins at the upper left hand corner of page 11, and then travels back and forth across two-page spans; from Codex Colombino 1893).

the title of tecuhtli was also part of a strategy by which Lord 8 Deer was able to claim rulership of Tilantongo, his birthplace, and establish that polity's second dynasty in AD 1098. The alliance between Lord 8 Deer and Lord 4 Jaguar would therefore have been mutually beneficial. Lord 8 Deer would have gained a powerful military ally as well as a means of legitimating his claim to the thrones of both Tututepec and Tilantongo. Lord 4 Jaguar, as well as the broader Tolteca-Chichimeca alliance, would in turn have gained access to highly valued coastal goods.

Surprisingly, Tututepec disappears from the codical record after Lord 8 Deer's ascendancy at Tilantongo. Despite numerous claims that Lord 8 Deer created a kingdom that united the Mixteca Alta and coast (e.g., Caso 1979: 390; Smith 1973: 68; Spores 1993: 169), this is never explicitly shown in the codices. To understand coastal history for the remainder of the Postclassic, it is necessary to turn away from heroic histories and return to the archaeological record.

The Late Postclassic Imperial Center of Tututepec

Recent archaeological survey and excavation in the lower Río Verde Valley indicates that during the Late Postclassic Tututepec became one of the most powerful political centers in Mesoamerica (Joyce et al. 2004a, 2004b). Settlement in the region as a whole was nucleated with Tututepec accounting for 94% of the occupational area in the survey. The results of the full-coverage survey show that during the Late Postclassic, Tututepec grew to become the largest site in Mesoamerica covering approximately 2185 ha. In comparison, Smith (2001) estimates the Aztec capital of Tenochtitlán at 1350 ha, although population sizes of Central Mexican cities were much greater than at Tututepec.

Population estimates of Late Postclassic Tututepec range from 11,000 to 22,000 people, while Tenochtitlán's population is estimated to have been about 150,000-200,000 (Joyce et al. 2004a: 288).

Regionally, Tututepec was the first-order center in a five-tiered settlement hierarchy. There was a continuation of the Early Postclassic trend of people moving into higher elevations with piedmont settlement increasing from 62% in the Early Postclassic to 93% by the Late Postclassic with almost all of Tututepec located in the foothills. The settlement shift to higher elevations in the lower Verde is in marked contrast to Late Postclassic settlement in the Mixteca Alta where people move to lower elevations adjacent to the valley floors (Byland and Pohl 1994: 61; Spores 1972: 190; Stiver 2001). An even more curious shift involved the almost complete abandonment of the floodplain west of the Río Verde. During the Late Postclassic only two sites have been found on the west side of the river. These sites cover a total of 3 ha, which constitutes 0.1% of the total occupational area in the full-coverage survey. It is not clear why people were moving off the floodplain, especially west of the river, although conflict, agricultural intensification, or changes in land tenure are possible explanations.

While Tututepec was covered with a nearly continuous scatter of domestic debris, the overall density of settlement appeared generally lower, although more variable, than at earlier sites on the floodplain. Artifact densities and counts of prehispanic residential terraces tended to be higher in the northern end of the site. A total of 386 terraces was recorded. Of course, artifact densities and terrace visibility are both significantly affected by site formation processes so that these patterns should be considered tentative. Detailed mapping of terraces in the northern part of the site, where residential excavations were carried out in 2005, indicates that the terrace count during the regional survey significantly underestimated the actual number. Terrace mapping in 2005 was conducted immediately following the burning of vegetation by local people in preparation for planting so that surface visibility was ideal.

The survey data suggest a complex internal organization at Tututepec with multiple zones of public architecture, high status residences, specialized craft production, and ritual activities (Joyce et al. 2004a, 2004b). Surface artifacts provided evidence for domestic activities, including food procurement and processing, pottery production, working of lithics, textile production, and household rituals. Mixtec polychrome pottery was common as was obsidian. The most common type of obsidian found during survey was from Pachuca in the Basin of Mexico, indicating trade with pochteca merchants. Evidence for the intensive production or consumption of obsidian tools was found on a ridge approximately 1 kilometer southeast of the Yucudzaa hill. The ridgetop was covered with obsidian debitage as well as blade fragments and cores. Densities were estimated as high as 100 obsidian artifacts/m^2. Recent excavations of two Late Postclassic houses show greater access to prestigious polychrome ceramics, obsidian, and copper artifacts than has been found in excavated non-royal residences in the highlands (see below).

Architectural remains included residential terraces, mounded architecture, and structure foundations along with frequent examples of building materials including cut stone and clay bricks. Most of the terraces and structure foundations visible on the surface appeared to be relatively modest in architectural elaboration and were presumably from commoner residences. There were five separate areas with mounded architecture, however. The areas with mounded architecture might correspond to aspects of the internal organization of the site, perhaps reflecting elite residences and/or public buildings associated with particular barrios. Early Colonial Period communities in the Mixteca Alta were divided into barrios or Siqui in Mixtec, as is modern Tututepec, although the composition and function of these barrios has been debated (Dahlgren 1990; Spores 1984: 168; Stiver 2001; Terraciano 2000).

A possible location of Lord 8 Deer's ballcourt ritual as depicted in the Codex Nuttall and Codex Colombino-Becker is at the site of San Francisco de Arriba, which contains a Late Postclassic ballcourt (Workinger 2002). San Francisco de Arriba would have been an outlying barrio on the city's northeastern boundary during the Late Postclassic. Another possible ballcourt has also been identified near Tututepec's center, on the hill known as Cerro de los Pájaros.

The civic-ceremonial core of the site appears to be the large prehispanic platform on which the Colonial Period church is located. The platform is about 10 m high and covers 2.9 ha. It is not clear how much of the platform was constructed with fill and how much contains a bedrock core. Oral histories suggest that the Church Platform supported the Late Postclassic and Early Colonial Period ruler's palace (Tibón 1961: 72). This claim is supported by the presence of four Disc Friezes that were placed into the walls of the church. The Disc Frieze is an architectural decoration depicted on Late Postclassic palaces in the codices. A dramatic example of the use of the Disc Frieze is found at the Casa de la Cacica, a sixteenth century royal residence that still stands in San Pedro y San Pablo Teposcolula in the Mixteca Alta.

Located until recently on the southeastern end of the Church Platform, and now moved into the community museum, is a group of eight carved stones (Joyce et al. 2004a; O'Mack 1990). The original proveniences of the carved stones are not certain, although Maler (1883: 158-159) reports that Monument 6 was intentionally buried near the church and was excavated by the local priest in 1830 (also see Tibón 1961: 72). Monument 6 is the most significant of the carved stones because of its resemblance to Tolteca-Chichimeca iconography (Figure 7). Many researchers have compared this monument to the Atlantid Warriors from Pyramid B at Tula (Jorrín 1974: 68; Piña Chan 1960: 72; Pohl 1999: 184), the original Tolteca-Chichimeca capital. Monument 6 is probably a representation of the Central Mexican deity Itzpapalotl, the Obsidian Butterfly, based on the stiff pose, *tezcacuitlapilli* back mirror, and her quechquemitl lined with what may be an obsidian knife border, all are characteristic of the Central Mexican Goddess (Pohl 1999: 184). The monument provides archaeological support for Lord 8 Deer's alliance with the Tolteca-Chichimeca as shown in the codices. Early Colonial
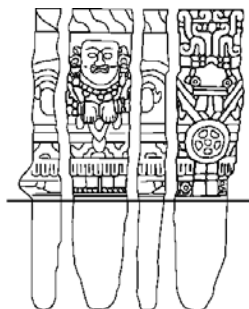
Figure 7. Tututepec, Monument 6

documents (Acuña 1984 I: 188, 193, 1985; Alva Ixtlilxochitl 1975[ca. 1600]: 1: 283; Pohl 1999: 183-184) as well as oral histories of Tututepec (Tibón 1961: 71) also record that people of Tututepec and its subject communities claimed to be Tolteca-Chichimeca and worshipped Itzpapalotl as a goddess (Acuña 1984 I: 188, 193). The other carved stones on the Church Platform include three zoomorphic tenoned-heads, a feline sculpture, and a small sculpture of an individual with his arms crossed on his chest that was removed from Tututepec for display in the Museo Nacional de México (see Piña Chan 1960: Foto 8). If the Church Platform was the original location of the majority of these stone monuments, the buildings on the platform would have been some of the most architecturally elaborate structures in Late Postclassic Oaxaca.

Excavations by Marc Levine in the northern part of the site in an area overlooking the Yutañaña stream approximately 1.25 kilometers northwest of the Church Platform has provided data on two Late Postclassic residences. Excavations were carried out at one relatively higher status residence (Operation A) and a second lower status residence (Operation B). A major objective was to recover data that would help us evaluate Tututepec's participation in interregional interaction networks linking this center with other areas of Late Postclassic Mesoamerica. The excavations were designed to examine variation in production, consumption and distribution in relation to status differences so as to explore Tututepec's political economy.

The Operation A residence was located on a high ridge top with a view of the Pacific Ocean and Tututepec's Church Platform to the south. An artificial platform measuring roughly 20 × 20 meters created a flattened area on the ridge and supported four low mounds surrounding a central patio. Of the four structures, the western one was the largest and displayed the most elaborate masonry construction.

The Operation B residence was located approximately 200 meters southwest of Operation A on a lower hilltop. A stone retaining wall ringed the hilltop, limiting erosion and creating a flat surface for the dwelling area. The primary structure sat atop a low mound that was flanked by two or three structures built on the ground surface. In comparison to Operation A, the patio areas were less clearly defined.

There were broad similarities in the architectural elements and form observed at Operations A and B. However, there are important differences suggesting that the Operation A residence was of a somewhat higher status. Most striking is the presence of the

large platform that supported the house mounds at Operation A. In addition, the walls associated with the main structure at Operation A displayed finer masonry compared to the primary structure at Operation B. A few fragments of painted stucco were also recovered at Operation A, suggesting that some of the structure walls may have been adorned with colorful plaster. Finally, a 'Z-shaped' architectural element, possibly part of an exterior facade, was found at Operation A.

The artifact assemblages recovered from the two residences reflect the range of activities commonly associated with domestic areas. There was an abundance of utilitarian and fine decorated pottery, spindle whorls, animal bone, copper bells (*cascabeles*) and 'axes,' obsidian and chert tools and debitage, hammerstones, ceramic figurines, stone axes, and groundstone (manos and metates). The majority of artifacts were recovered in middens located directly adjacent to the dwelling areas.

Although a similar range of artifact classes were present at both residences, preliminary results indicate variability in artifact frequencies. For example, Mixteca-Puebla style polychrome pottery comprised approximately 8.6% of all rim sherds at Operation A and 4.9% at Operation B. The higher frequency of polychromes at Operation A strengthens the argument that this was a higher status residence. The frequency of Mixteca-Puebla polychromes from Operation B, however, is significantly higher than that found in low status residences excavated in the Mixteca Alta region (see Lind 1987: Table 29; Perez 2003: Table 4.4), indicating that Tututepec's commoners had greater access to these prestigious vessels. An analysis of fauna also lends support to the assertion that Operation A was a relatively higher ranked residence. While people at the residences were utilizing deer, dog, rabbit, and to a lesser extent, fish, raptorial birds and terrestrial turtle, it appears that a greater amount and variety of animals were available to the inhabitants of the Operation A household.

Ceramic spindle whorls were common at Operations A and B, demonstrating that residents produced thread in both residences. Over a thousand obsidian tools and fragments were recovered from the residential excavations. At Operation A, the presence of exhausted obsidian cores and core platform rejuvenation flakes suggests that the inhabitants were manufacturing obsidian blades. No evidence of blade production was present at Operation B. Preliminary visual analysis demonstrates that nearly half (44.5%) of all obsidian was translucent and green in color, recognizable as obsidian from Pachuca, Hidalgo.[1]

The preliminary results of the excavations indicate that Tututepec maintained exchange relations with other parts of Oaxaca and central Mexico, but future sourcing analyses of ceramic and obsidian artifacts will clarify these interregional connections. The comparative analysis of architectural features and artifact assemblages indicates that the inhabitants of Operation A enjoyed a somewhat higher status compared to their

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[1] The remaining obsidian could not be clearly distinguished visually and will be determined through elemental analysis in the near future.

Operation B counterparts. Nonetheless, it appears that both households had access to a similar variety of artifact classes. Ongoing analyses are considering the implications of relatively equal access to commodities among commoners and higher status individuals for interpretations of Tututepec's political economy, including the nature of market exchange and role of prestige goods.

The size, wealth, and complexity of ancient Tututepec as shown by the survey and excavation data are consistent with Early Colonial documents that describe the site as the center of an expansionistic empire that dominated much of southern Oaxaca (Acuña 1984; Barlow 1949; Berlin 1947; Davies 1968; Spores 1993). Early Colonial records indicate that at its maximum extent Tututepec controlled an empire extending from the modern Oaxaca-Guerrero border east to Huamelula and the Isthmus of Tehuantepec, south to the Pacific Ocean, and north approximately 80 km to towns such as Zacatepec, Juchatengo, and Suchixtepec (Figure 1). Tututepec threatened towns as distant as Achiutla, 125 km to the north, and Tehuantepec, 250 km east. The extent of Tututepec's empire, ranging from the semi-tropical coastal plain to towns like Suchixtepec at 2500 m above sea level indicates that the polity continued to pursue a strategy of verticality to gain access to resources from the different environmental zones of the macro-region. Tribute ranged from gold, copper, feathers, textiles, and cacao from lowland communities to cochineal and cotton mantas from highland towns. The rulers of Tututepec also used their control over coastal resources to establish exchange ties with highland centers, including Tenochtitlán as indicated by the abundance of Pachuca obsidian recorded by the survey and excavations (Workinger 2002). While Tututepec seems to have had exchange relations with Aztec Tenochtitlán, political relations between the two empires were tense (Davies 1987: 208-209).

The wealth and power of Tututepec also attracted the attention of Hernán Cortés shortly after his conquest of Tenochtitlán on August 13, 1521. In January 1522, Cortés dispatched his lieutenant Pedro de Alvarado and 200 Spanish soldiers to the Pacific coast where they were joined by a Zapotec army from Tehuantepec, Tututepec's enemy to the east (Cortés 1971: 276; Díaz del Castillo 1955: 101). Alvarado arrived in Tututepec in February of 1522 and conquered Tututepec by March 4 of that year (Cortés 1971: 276). Oppression and epidemics rapidly decimated the coastal population. The population of the Tututepec Empire at the time of the conquest has been estimated as more than 250,000 (Greenberg 1981: 65), yet only an estimated 4500 people were recorded at Tututepec in the census of 1544 (Dahlgren 1990: 42). Our survey results are consistent with the Early Colonial census records as we recorded colonial pottery from only about 1.5 km^2 in the area of the modern town, although this figure could be deceptive since prehispanic pottery types probably continued to be used for decades after the conquest.

Conclusions

Our research demonstrates that the archaeological record of Late Postclassic Tututepec

is consistent with the ethnohistorical depiction of the site as an urban center and the political capital of a powerful empire. By integrating the codical and archaeological records, our research indicates that the city was founded early in the Late Postclassic. A model of 'heroic history,' Lord 8 Deer 'Jaguar Claw' was able to found a new dynasty because of a combination of advantageous historical, political, economic, and ecological circumstances. The archaeological record shows that at the end of the eleventh century the lower Verde region would have been vulnerable to outside conquest following the collapse of the Río Viejo state and the ensuing political fragmentation and unrest (Joyce et al. 2001). We argue that Lord 8 Deer took advantage of these circumstances to found a new Mixtec dynasty at Tututepec. The huge increase in population inferred from the settlement data along with the shift in ceramics and architecture to highland Mixtec styles, are consistent with the codical record of a Mixtec intrusion into the lower Verde region at ca. AD 1100.

The archaeological data recorded in our full-coverage surveys are consistent with Early Colonial documents, which show that Tututepec continued as a powerful polity until the Spanish Conquest. At 21.85 km^2, Tututepec was far larger and more complex than typical highland Mixtec cacicazgos of the Late Postclassic. The data suggest a complex internal organization with multiple zones of public architecture, high status residences, specialized craft production, and ritual activities. Early Colonial ethnohistory indicates that Tututepec eventually dominated an area of approximately 25,000 km^2 and threatened towns well into the Oaxacan interior. While much research remains to be done on ancient Tututepec and its empire, for the first time we can see a correspondence between the ethnohistoric and archaeological records, which demonstrates that Tututepec was indeed a powerful imperial center and a key player in the Late Postclassic world.

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Ronald Spores[1]

Excavations at Yucundaa, Pueblo Viejo de Teposcolula

More than 2000 years ago, residents of the central Mixteca settled atop Yucundaa, a mountain located approximately 2.5 kilometers southeast of modern San Pedro y San Pablo Teposcolula. A town-sized settlement covering approximately 25 hectares was established and persisted for perhaps four centuries. To date, little is known of the early history of the site, but it is clear that around AD 300 the site was abandoned and settlement shifted to surrounding sites, some of which had been occupied since Middle Preclassic times. Among the more important of these Preclassic-Classic settlements are Yucuninde, El Fortín, San Vicente Ñuñu, San Miguel Tixa, and Tres Arbolitos (Stiver 2001; Balkansky 1996; Spores 1996; Balkansky and Kowalewski 2000). The reasons for the abandonment of Yucundaa are not yet known. It is clear that the Teposcolula Valley and the surrounding area remained intensively occupied, but for some reason Yucundaa was bypassed by the inhabitants of the region (Figure 1).

Yucundaa remained unoccupied until sometime between AD 950 and 1200, when it was re-occupied and developed as an important urban settlement. Whereas the transitional Preclassic-Early Classic site covered some 25 hectares, the Postclassic settlement

Figure 1. The ancient city of Pueblo Viejo de Teposcolula Yucundaa is located on the mountain of the same name in the background, and to the east of the colonial and present-day community of San Pedro y San Pablo Teposcolula in the left foreground.

settlement spread over the summit and high ridge of Yucundaa and down the slopes to the east and west, eventually covering at least 290 hectares (Stiver 2001: 194-197, 300). During the later Postclasic period, Yucundaa became a regional capital and one of Oaxaca's most important cities (Figure 2).

Yucundaa continued to function as a city and political capital in Colonial times until it was abandoned around 1550 in favor of a new location on the valley floor some 2.5 kilometers west of the old city. By that time Yucundaa had been devastated by at least two major epidemics in the 1530's and 1540's. Untold thousands died and were buried in massive cemeteries at Yucundaa. Twenty eight individuals have been recovered and analyzed by project physical anthropologists, with countless hundreds remaining to be investigated (See reports of Laura Roldán, Laura Diego Luna, and Ixtchel Ruiz Ríos; Spores and Robles García 2005b) (Figure 3).

Antonio Mendoza, en route to Huatulco and, thence, to Peru, passed through the newly relocated Teposcolula in December, 1550. He disapproved of the move from Yucundaa to the valley and ordered a cessation to resettlement. The viceroy believed that the original site was preferable to the unsuitable, camp and unstable location selected by the Spanish friars for the new city. (Instrucciones y Memorias de los Virreyes Novohispanos). However, Mendoza's successor as viceroy, Luis Velasco I, approved the relocation, and, by 1552, Yucundaa was indeed the Pueblo Viejo de Teposcolula. From that time until the end of the Colonial period, the newly located center continued
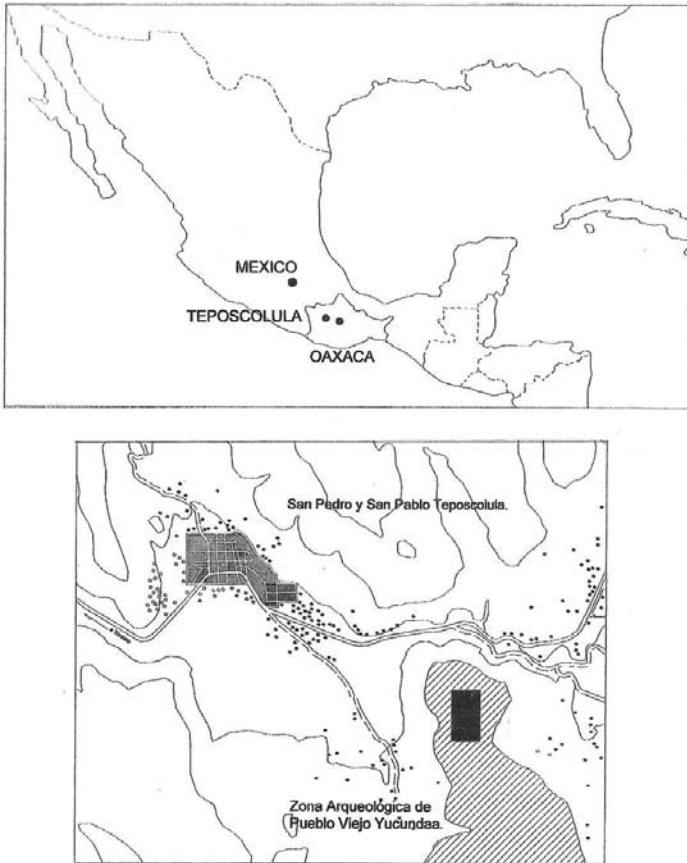
Figure 2. Location maps of SP y SP Teposcolula and Yucundaa (José Luis Tenorio Rodríguez)

to function as the urban capital of the native kingdom, or cacicazgo, or Teposcolula and as the cabecera of the extensive Provincia and Alcaldía Mayor of Teposcolula (Gerhard 1986: 292-299) (Figure 4).

In April, 2004, INAH, the Fundación Alfredo Harp Helu, and the pueblo of San Pedro y San Pablo Teposcolula began a three-year project of archaeological and ethnohistorical investigations of the large, previously unexplored, urban site of Pueblo Viejo de Teposcolula Yucundaa, Oaxaca (Spores, Robles García, et al. 2005a; Spores, Robles García, et al. 2005b). The present report reviews the results of two field seasons of excavation, conducted from early April, 2004, to mid-August, 2005. The primary objectives of the project are to study the structure, function and evolution of a whole urban settlement as a social, political and economic system and to observe the form and development of the city during the Postclassic period and to observe its transformations during early Spanish colonial times (Figures 5 and 6)

Figure 3. Yucundaa with a view to the north-north-east and showing parallel platforms, standing walls, and structures running generally north-south along the western perimeter of the capital center.
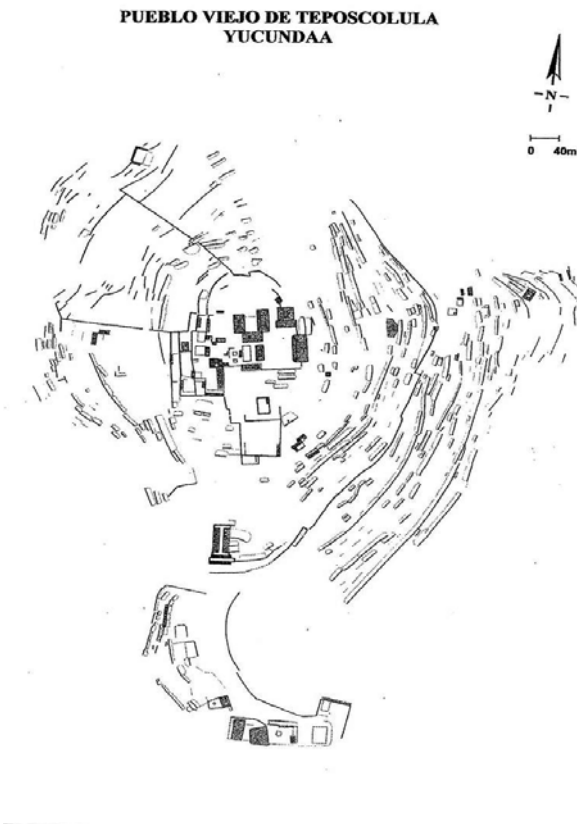
Figure 4. Pueblo Viejo de Teposcolula Yucundaa (After Stiver)
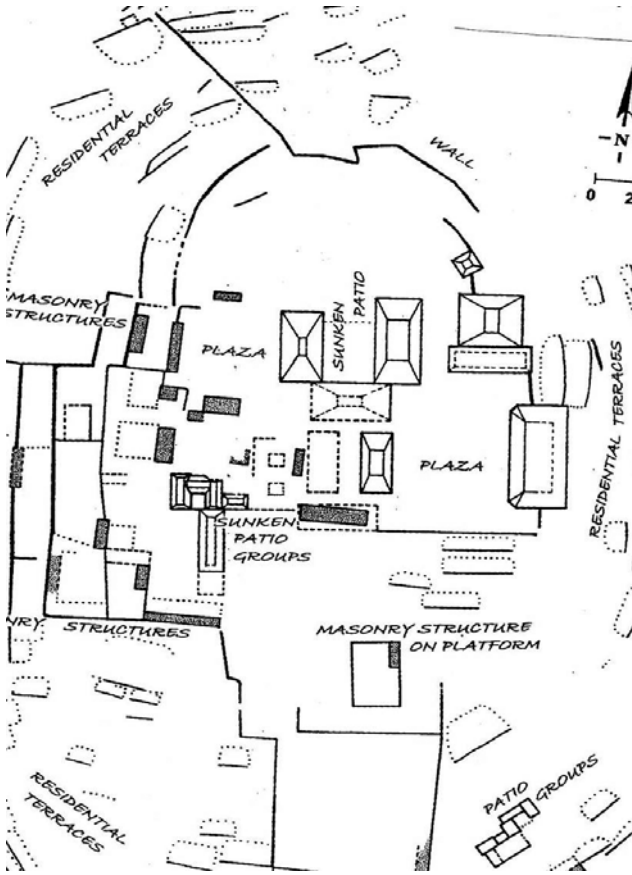
Figure 5. Central zone of Yucundaa (After Stiver), West Patio surrounded by four major mounds, E-1, E-2, E-3, and E-4, middle-upper left.

Lama-bordo Terrace Agriculture

An essential element in all civilizations of the world is agriculture that has been developed to the point of producing subsistence for their populations and, additionally, adequate surpluses to sustain the elaboration of the culture, specialized services, crafts, arts, calendrics and writing, support for markets and local and long-distance exchange of goods and to provide wealth to sustain a sociopolitical elite.

It is well known that the Mixteca is an area of limited extended flatlands, and that it is characterized by mountains, hills, low and high ridges, undulating rivers, gullies and arroyos, and semi-arid wastelands. In response to the scarcity of cultivable lands in the lowlands and on accessible slopes, a reluctance to work sharply sloping lands (true to

Figure 6. Settlement Survey Map indicating sites in the Teposcolula Valley occupied during Postclassic (Natividad Phase) times. Yucundaa is large site in lower center of map (Stiver 2001).

the present day), demographic pressures, and general adaptation to their territory, the Mixtecs developed agricultural terraces composed of fine soils ('*lama*') eroded from the slopes during the rainy season and trapped and retained buy a series of stone walls ('*camellones*', '*presas*,' or '*bordos*'). This resulted in the formation of a system of irrigation or, better stated, management of soil and water, a significant variant of world hydraulic systems that has been given the name '*lama-bordo*' or, in the Mixtec language, '*coo-yuu*' (Spores 1969, 1983, 1984: 12-13, 40, 81, 2005; Figures 7 and 8).

Although originally developed in the late Preclassic period, possibly as early as 500 BC., the lama-bordo system grew notably in the Classic period and reached its apogee in Postclassic times. With the retention of fertility beyond that of non-irrigated valley lowlands, these fields had the capacity to produce crops through most of the year. This terrace-irrigation agricultural system was of critical importance not only to Yucundaa but in the numerous settlements within its political sphere and in dozens of communities elsewhere in the Mixteca Alta.

Excavations at Yucundaa, Pueblo Viejo de Teposcolula

Figure 7. Lama-bordo terrace under cultivation, spring, 2005

Figure 8. The same terrace two months later.

Figure 9. Eduard Seler and citizens of Teposcolula visit the Gran Plaza (Building E-1 in background) around 1895 (Photo courtesy Ibero-American Institute, Berlin).

The Great Plaza

As the Postclassic city expanded, the summit location of the Early Classic settlement, was rededicated as a 'Great Plaza', extending approximately 200 meters north-south by 165 meters east-west. New structures were expanded and superimposed over older remains, and new walls and buildings were constructed around the peripheries of the plaza. The former open mountain-top settlement was transformed into an enclosed precinct containing numerous buildings and surrounded by elevated buildings and stone alignments (Figures 9 & 10).

The Great Plaza complex dominates the summit of Yucundaa. The eastern limits of the Plaza are defined and punctuated by the two largest mounds on the site. Several 'mound' structures, not yet explored, are found in the middle third of the precinct. The western third of the Great Plaza was a Postclassic civic-ceremonial complex, the principal component being four large buildings placed on the four sides of a central patio (See detailed reports of Laura Diego Luna in Spores and Robles García 2005a and 2005b). The west patio measures approximately 33 meters east-west by 37 meters north-south. The west mound (E-1) measures 21 meters north-south by 7 meters east-west and, with its remnant standing walls, is 3.5 meters high. The east mound (E-3) is 35 meters north-south, by 22 meters east-west, and is approximately 2 meters high. Mound E-4 on the

Figure 10. The Gran Plaza, West Patio: Building E-1.

north side of the complex measures 19 meters east-west by 8 meters north-south and is 3 meters high. The south mound (E-2) is also approximately 3 meters high, and measures 18.5 meters east-west by 13 meters north-south, with prominent structural extensions continuing to the east. The total area of the west patio and its structures presently under investigation totals over 2500 square meters (Figures 11 and 12).

The middle portion of the west mound (E-1) has been excavated to reveal a broad stucco floor (approximately 6.5 meters wide by 21 meters long) with a 5 meter wide doorway flanked by large, round, columns. Mound E-3, on the east has been extensively investigated. It is dominated by a large hall ('sala') extending 17 meters north-south by 5 meters east-west, also with round columnar bases flanking a 4 meter-wide entrance. Directly articulated rooms and patios extend to the south and east of the main hall. Along the south end of the mound is a 3 meter-wide east-west passageway which separates Mound E-3 from Mound E-2. The area to the east of Mound E-3 awaits excavation in 2006.

During the Colonial period the large 'patio' (approximately 35 meters square) lying between mounds E-1, E-3, E-4, and E-5 became a vast cemetery for victims of epidemics of the 1530's and 1540's. During the 2004 and 2005 seasons 28 burials, the majority of them from multiple graves, were recovered. These are currently under analysis, but it

Figure 11. Building E-1. Showing plaster floor and one of two rounded columns at the east entrance to the building.

Figure 12. Gran Plaza, West Patio, Building E-3, with hundreds of Colonial burials filling the 35 meter by 35 meter "patio" between Building E-3 and Building E-1.

is significant that, to date, no significant pathology or genetic anomalies or indications of violent death have been observed (Figures 13 & 14).

A dwelling complex was recovered on the outer flanks of the southwest corner of the Plaza (E-2). The structure contained several rooms, 3 fireplaces, polished plaster floors, well formed staircases, and beautifully formed mosaic and tablet walls. The retaining walls of the Plaza forming the northern limit of the E-2 complex slope upward in the form of a talus dressed with finely worked stone tablets (Figures 15 and 16)

Figure 13. Gran Plaza (Area A): Recovery of victims of one of the epidemics devastating Yucundaa between 1530 and 1550.

Figure 14. Multiple burials of epidemic victims, Gran Plaza.

Figure 15. Elite residential complex (E-2), southwest of Gran Plaza.

Figure 16. Distinctively "Mixtec" wall construction, residential complex (E-2), immediately adjacent to southwest wall of Gran Plaza.

This is a Postclassic civic-ceremonial complex that continued to function during the early Colonial period. To date, no fire places or significant waste deposits have been found in the large structures surrounding the west patio, and the assumption is that these were civic-ceremonial, rather than residential, buildings. The structures, the urban plan, and the overall material culture complex are Prehispanic. However, certain features, such as finely worked cantera stone bases for roof supports may reflect the use of Spanish metal tools. The appearance of Spanish-influenced polychrome ceramics (Mixteca Polychrome: Yucundaa variety) in and around the structures is an even more persuasive indication of a European presence in Yucundaa.

The rest of the city

The Postclassic period settlement extended in all directions from the Great Plaza 'acropolis', but most notably to the south, west, and east. The northern area was also occupied, but less so than the other areas due to a relatively steep rise to the north, terminating in a nearly vertical promontory-cliff overlooking the valley floor to the west, north, and east. By the beginning of late Postclassic times a large elite center had developed in and around the enclosed precinct, or Great Plaza, and extending to the west and south for some 250 meters to include at least two enormous royal-class residential complexes and three major platforms extending from 20 to 24 meters wide (east-west) by 120 to 210 meters long (north-south) and built up from 5 to 7 meters above the underlying natural base. These platforms contain dozens of contiguous elite status residences. Further down slope is a proliferation of smaller simpler residences of the commoner (tay ñuu, macehual, or plebeyo) population of the city. Some 250 meters south of the Plaza, royal residences (Excavation Unit I-2), and platforms (Units B, C, H and A) is first the Ball Court (K) and, some 200 meters further south, are located a large elite administrative-residential complex (L) and contiguous civic-ceremonial precinct, numerous probable common-class residences, and a triple lama-bordo terrace system.

A Royal-class (Tay Tnuhu) Palace Complex

Some 70 meters south of the Great Plaza is an extensive residential complex (Unit I-2) containing many rooms, patios, aligned stone and adobe walls, passageways, red plaster floors, a dozen rectangular fire places, and mosaic and table wall facings (see reports of Laura Elena Chávez García in Spores and Robles García 2005a, and of Alma Montiel and Laura Stiver in Spores and Robles García 2005b). Some 1600 square meters of the complex have been investigated, and there is no indication that its limits have been reached or even approached. The origins of this sprawling structure clearly date to the late Postclassic period, but it, like the Plaza complex above, was adapted and continued to be occupied during early Colonial times (Figures 17, 18, 19, 20, 21)

Figure 17. Royal residence (I-2) during excavations, 2004.

Figure 19. Walls and stairway of royal residence (I-2)
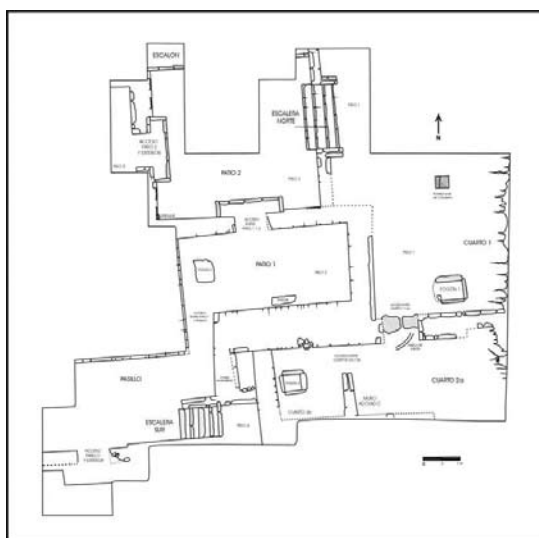
PROYECTO ARQUEOLÓGICO
PUEBLO VIEJO DE TEPOSCOLULA
SECTOR 1
UNIDAD DE EXCAVACIÓN I-2
PLANTA GENERAL ESTRUCTURA 22
DIBUJÓ: RSP
ESCALA 1:20

Figure 18. Plan of royal residence (Unidad I-2) at the end of the 2004 field season.

Figure 20. Decorative-symbolic element from frieze of royal residence (I-2).

Figure 21. Polychrome ceramics from royal residence (Unit I-2).

The ceramic complex, featuring Mixteca Polychrome: Yucundaa variety, is stylistically 'Mixtec' but modified in its decorative elements to gain acceptance by the Spanish Clergy. The 'keystoned', or curvilinear, block arch is introduced, along with hinged, 'swinging' doors. A very occasional Spanish ceramic fragment is found, but so far no identifiable metal or glass objects or European domesticated plant or animal remains have been recovered. Beautifully sculpted stone discs, symbolic-decorative elements from exterior and interior friezes, have been found in the building. The level of Spanish influence which may be reflected in these highly decorative elements remains unclear, but there is no doubt that the friezes decorating the upper walls were Prehispanic architectural elements that continued into Colonial times (See codices Nuttall, Vindobonensis, Bodley, and Colombino; Kirakofe 1995).

The civic-ceremonial complex of the Great Plaza may best be compared to similar structural groupings at Mitla in the Valley of Oaxaca, while the I-2 Palacio complex most closely compares to the labyrinth-like 'palace complex' at Yagul, also in the Valley of Oaxaca just a few kilometers west of Mitla (Paddock 1966). Within the Mixteca Alta, in the late 1960's a temporally comparable royal residence was excavated adjacent to the Iglesia Vieja de Chachoapan in the Valley of Nochixtlan (Lind 1979, 1987; Spores 1984: 48-63). The Chachoapan structure is in the style of Yucundaa Unit I-2, with multiple rooms, patios, drainage, etc, contained both Prehispanic and early Colonial components, and was adjacent to the Iglesia Vieja de Chachoapan, one of the earliest Spanish religious constructions in the area. Both the Chachoapan and the Yucundaa I-2 buildings are royal status households, but Yucundaa I-2 is far larger and more complex, probably a reflection of the relative importance of the two señoríos and their residents. Yucundaa was far larger and more important politically than Chachoapan in both Prehispanic and Colonial times.

The Ballcourt

Some 400 meters south of the Great Plaza is one of Oaxaca's largest ballcourts, measuring approximately 54 meters in length by 24 meters wide at is central point (See report of Roberto Santos Pérez in Spores and Robles García 2005a). Excavation extending approximately two meters below the floor of the Postclassic court revealed an earlier structure, probably the floor of a Classic Period ball court. During the later period of occupation, the playing surface of the court was covered in white stucco and decorated with a series of painted circular red discs. At some point in its later history the eastern half of the court was filled with a north-south alignment of dwellings.

The ballcourt is surrounded on the west, east and south sides by notable, still uninvestigated structures, including, to the south, the Gran Calzada. Investigation of the Ball Court is quite preliminary, with further investigation scheduled for the 2006 field season (Figures 22, 23, 24)

The Great Roadway (La Gran Calzada)

One striking feature of Yucundaa is a major roadway, 'La Gran Calzada', which circumscribes the central site for a distance of 2.5 kilometers. Although it has been designated a 'defensive wall' by Stiver (2001), the structure is now believed to constitute a monumental 'raised avenue' linking dozen of caves and numerous structures and activity areas. The feature varies from 20 to 25 meters in width and from 2 to 4 meters in depth (Figures 25, 26).

It is currently hypothesized that the caves and the connecting roadway constitute a vast ritual-ceremonial complex for the Mixtecs who saw deep religious significance in caves as the origins of life and fertility and as repositories for deceased rulers and

Figure 22. Excavation of Ball Court during 2004 season.

Figure 23. Exploratory trench dissecting Ball Court to reveal stucco paved surfaces extending from the structure's eastern limits, along "playing floor" and up west talus slope.

Figure 24. Roberto Santos discusses Ball Court excavations with visitors.
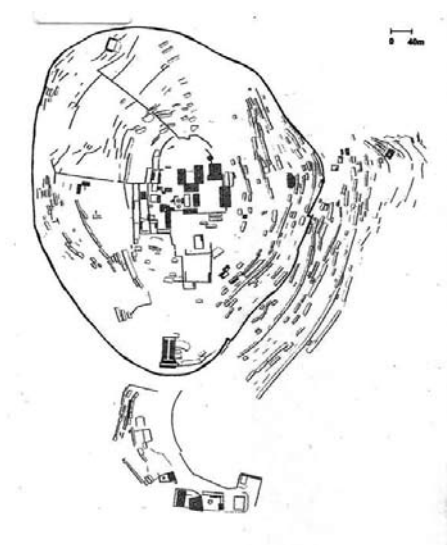
Figure 25. Map showing the Great Roadway of the Caves.

Figure 26. Entrance to sealed cave on the Gran Calzada.

nobles (Spores 1983, 1984, 2005). This great 'avenue', while serving as an impressive ritual-ceremonial complex, served to delimit the central zone of the capital, but it could have served as a defensive barrier. The fact that hundreds of houses and other buildings were constructed outside the wall and the relatively easy access across the wall lead us to conclude that it was not a primarily defensive structure. This feature (Unit W) will be the subject of intensive study during the 2006 season.

The Southern Royal Administrative-Residential Complex and Lama-bordo Terrace System

Approximately 200 meters to the south of the Ballcourt and the Great Wall (Gran Muralla) is an impressive Postclassic residential complex (See report of Verónica Pérez Rodríguez and Nobuyuki Matsubara in Spores and Robles García 2005b). It is associated with a large, as yet unexplored, civic-ceremonial complex to the west. At this far southern extremity of the central zone, three extensive lama-bordo terraces (two running east and one to the west) meet at the crest of Yucundaa, and at the point of convergence there is a major architectural complex. This clearly indicates that Yucundaa incorporates within its urban boundaries components of a well developed terrace agricultural system (Figures 27, 28, 29).

Excavations completed to date reveal an extensive 'split-level' residence built around a central courtyard and containing polished red floors, walls, stairways, patios, passageways, and a drainage system. To the west of the Postclassic complex is a large structural complex that most likely dates initially to the Early Classic settlement of the site, but which underwent significant modification and expansion during Postclassic times and which continued to be utilized in early Colonial times.

Although clearly contemporaneous with the royal complex (unit I-2) to the west of the Iglesia Vieja, the form and style of decoration and general disposition of the com-

Figure 27. Excavation of southern royal class complex (Unidad L)

Figure 28. Stairway, southern royal class complex (Unit L).

Figure 29. Interior rooms with fire places, southern royal class complex (Unit L)

plex contrasts with unit I-2. Although walls are constructed with keyed endeque blocks, much like structures in units I-2 and on the Great Plaza (unit E), the southern complex lacks the fine miniature-mosaic decoration, and to date no large decorative discs have been recovered. Also the overall ceramic complexes differ somewhat, and there is a stronger representation of clearly European forms such as the well-known 'Atzompa

green glaze ware'; there are much stronger indications of obsidian preparation and utilization. However, the arched doorway stones found in the elite I-2 structures and the unit C noble class residences have not been recovered in unit L. Curiously, the polychrome pottery encountered so far seems to more strongly reflect purely Prehispanic design elements and includes less Spanish-influenced decoration.

The lama-bordo system of Unit L existed during the Postclassic period as a well developed agricultural complex. There are three large series of terraces, two in the declivities on the east slope of the site and one on the west. These components converge on the top of the site, and at this point three is the impressive civic-ceremonial and residential complex. It is surmised that it is more than simple coincidence that the elite complex existed precisely at the point of convergence of the three terraced elements. Quite likely the two are directly related. Although it is certain that the complex existed in Postclassic and Colonial times, investigations in 2006 will continue to determine if there are Classic period antecedents in the same locality.

Noble Class (Tay Toho) Houses

Investigation of extended terraces lying to the west of, and just below, the Great Plaza, produced remains of well-constructed, medium-size domestic structures. Three major terraces on the upper western slopes of the site measure 175, 210 and 250 meters from north to south, and approximately 20 meters in width. The terraces range from five to seven meters in deptha and contain abundant structural remains.

Excavation Unit C produced remains of a large, well-planned, and well-constructed house (See reports of Laura Elena Chávez García and Laura Stiver in Spores and Robles García 2005a). The structure has keyed endeque block walls, polished red floors, passageways, patios, well-spaced entries, and – quite significantly – one or more arched doorways. Vertical testing at this locality revealed two major periods of construction-modification finished with expertly laid sloping walls of uniformly sized blocks and tablets. The well-designed structures on these terraces are clearly intermediate between the royal status palacios of excavation units I-2 and L and the common class houses (unit J) discussed below (Figures 30, 31, 32).

From the evidence gathered from excavation unit C, it can be inferred that these are remains of noble class (Tay toho) households. This physical evidence provides further support for the view that Yucundaa was a large, urban, socially stratified center. The existence of arched doorways and ceramic evidence clearly indicate the continued use and modification of these structures in early Colonial times.

Common Class (Tay Yucu, Tay Ñuu and Tay Sintundayu) Residences

In June of 2005, work began on the residential terraces located directly to the east of the Great Plaza at the middle levels of Yucundaa and some 100 vertical meters below the

Figure 30. Excavating noble house complex (Unit C-1)

Figure 31. Noble class household (Unit C-1)

Figure 32. Laura Stiver registering walls and floors of noble household complex (Unit C-2)

Figure 33. Common class house (J-2) facing east on east slope of Yucundaa

summit and 100 meters above the valley floor and outside the Great Roadway (See report of Verenice Heredia in Spores and Robles García 2005b). There are several hundred such terraces on the site, and unit J was selected as a probable representative construction. Although the terraces tend to gradually blend one into another, the Unit J-1 terrace upon which the houses are constructed measures approximately 40 meters by 25 meters. It contains numerous structures, of which two closely grouped, but separate, houses were excavated (Figure 33)

Although the architecture and the material culture continue to be studied, it is clear that these are common class residences, containing abundant materials, both on the floors and in clearly related trash deposits. This contrasts notably with the 'well-swept' houses of the native elite (units I-2 and L), and of the Colonial period Dominican monastery. Some of the most complete, or nearly complete, artifacts came from Unit J. Also a quite remarkable cache of 34 green stone and jade figures (including 28 penates) and 81 stone and bone beads was recovered from a pit that had been intentionally sealed under a fireplace (fogón) in house no. 1. Abundant pottery fragments, including polychrome, numerous vessels and abundant obsidian blades, were associated with both structures. House no. 2 contained a fine example of a whistle with a delicate depiction of Dzaui, the rain 'deity'. Surviving portions of the houses suggest that construction was quite good, with indications of pragmatic alterations and/or extensions of the houses – much in the manner of houses of growing Mixteca families of the present day (Figures 34, 35)

Figure 34. Selection of penates from cache under fireplace in common class house (J-1)

The Mixteca Social Class System as seen in Yucundaa

The results of the excavations of Unit J, coupled with investigation of elite households at the higher levels and summit of the site, tend to confirm the original hypothesis of the project that Yucundaa represents a Postclassic and early Colonial Mixtec city composed of at least three – and probably four – social classes (See discussion in Spores 1974,1976,1984: 64-74, 47-48, 97-121, 172-173) . The site, in effect, is in the form of a cone (See fig. 26), with the ruling class (yaa tnuhu) – and, later, Spanish clergymen – at the apex of the cone, the nobility (tay toho) just below as the cone begins to flare outward, with common class (tay yucu or tay ñuu, and probably tay situndayu) residences stretching out below over the broader extensions of the cone (Figure 36).

Given the nearly total lack of explicit historical documentation relating to the site, the remains of the city do, in fact, constitute a 'physical document' of the culture and development of the city in Postclassic and early Colonial times. Although one of the truly

Figure 35. Miniature figure of Dzahui from whistle, commoner residence (Unit J).

Figure 36. Representation of the four class social hierarchy at Yucundaa as reflected in the physical layout from the top of the mountain to the middle and lower slopes.

significant aspects of the site is its clear representation of the great Postclassic-Spanish colonial transformation of Mixtec society, there is no evidence of violent confrontation or social disruption. There is no discernible shift in social class patterns or relationships during the 25-30 years of joint occupation by thousands of natives and a very few Spaniards.

One remarkable feature, however, is that there are stronger indications of a 'hidden' persistence of Prehispanic elements in the common class houses than in elite residences. This is reflected in the figurine cache, the whistle figure of Dzahui, and persistence of more Prehispanic decorative elements in the polychrome ceramics found in Unit J than in the other localities. The implication is that the upper classes were in closer contact with the Spanish clergy and, as a result, came under closer scrutiny than did the lower classes. Such a finding confirms the revelations of the protracted Holy Inquisition process (AGN Inquisición 37) of 1544-46 against the ruler and two nobles of Yanhuitlan, which clearly indicate that the practices, as well as the appurtenances, of Prehispanic religion and ritual were far more clearly evident in the outlying settlements of the Yanhuitlan cacicazgo than they were in the cabecera. There was a clear attempt to 'hide' both practices and ritual objects in the small pueblos and countryside where they were less vulnerable to the gaze of Spanish clergymen.

The Iglesia Vieja and Dominican Monastery at Yucundaa

Many significant features of what is probably the earliest preserved church in the Mixteca have been recovered at Yucundaa (See reports of Roberto Santos Pérez in Spores and Robles García 2005a and of Concepción Cruz García in Spores and Robles García 2005b). During the 2004 season, successful attempts were made to define the boundaries of the church structure and to investigate several of its functional components. The investigation produced significant data on the nave and presbiterio, a main entrance at the southern extreme of the structure, a west-side entrance in the southwest quadrant, four quarried-stone bases (pilasters) for interior support columns, a baptismal font support in the far southeastern corner of the nave and just inside the main entrance, the main altar with support niches to support an altar retablo at the northern end of the nave, and a secondary altar, corner niche and pedestal support on the interior west side, and significant carved stone elements and red, white, and black paint applied to walls, floors, niches, and doorways. Extensive excavation of the church is planned for 2006 (Figures 37, 38, 39, 40).

South of the south entrance to the church is a lower platform believed to have been the main atrium of the church, probable public plaza and periodic market area, and an important cemetery for victims of the devastating epidemics of the 1530's and 1540's. Excavation of this important component of the site will be conducted in 2006, when several test trenches will be opened to ascertain activities taking place on the platform and its relationship to the church and to other components of the city.

One of the most important events of the Yucundaa Project has been the discovery of what is likely the earliest preserved Dominican monastery in the Mixteca (See report of Concepción Cruz Robles in Spores and Robles García 2005b). In March and April of 2005, during intensive investigation of the area bordering the north wall and northwest corner of the church, additional structures were discovered. To the west and northwest

Figure 37. Excavation underway at the Iglesia Vieja (I-1), 2004

Figure 38. Altar mayor. Northern extremity of Iglesia

Figure 39. Base of baptismal font, southeast corner and immediately to right of main entrance to Iglesia.

Figure 40. Secondary altar and niche, west side of nave, Iglesia Vieja.

Figure 41. View of monastery, sacristy and, in the background, wall separating monastery and church.

of the church are a plaza, a 'hall' directly contiguous to the church, an additional independent building, and a small 'shrine'. To the north of the church is a walled patio with an east to west sloping floor, two sealed entrances and a drainage system. Directly east of the patio and on the northeastern and eastern sides of the church are numerous rooms and passageways and a small central courtyard-garden. The structural complex is well planned and constructed of fitted masonry blocks and tablets, plastered floors, stairways, niches and storage areas. Among the more impressive discoveries were four circular carved stone disks of the Dominican symbols and a round 'Santa Maria' emblem and additional fragments of other symbolic-decorative elements relating to the Dominican Order. These were found along the outer side of the north and northwest walls backing the main altar and inside the patio (Figures 41, 42, 43)

The Monastery[2] is large and impressive for its time (1530-1550) and is a critical component in the great colonial transformation that occurred in Yucundaa. Our early

[2] Ethnohistorian Manuel Esparza suggests that complex should be designated 'Casa Dominicana', rather than 'Convento' (Monastery), since at this early time the foundation had not been formally recognized as a convent and since it does not appear to have housed the requisite number of friars to have qualified as such. The matter remains under discussion.

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Figure 42. View of monastery showing portions of patio, cells, storeroom, other rooms, and passage ways, 2005.

Figure 43. View from northeast to southwest of monastery cells, passage way, store room, and in the background, the sacristy and wall separating the monastery from the nave of the church.

Figure 44. Dominican seal (40 cm in diameter), recovered from northwest corner of monastery.

Figure 45. Santa Maria symbol (18 cm in diameter) recovered from just north of the northwest wall separating the church from the monastery.

assumption that the Iglesia Vieja was constructed under direction of secular clergy arriving in the Mixteca before the Domincans is now seriously in doubt. It is, of course, quite possible that church construction may have begun in pre-Dominican times and that it was completed by the friars at a later time. The emerging consensus of architects, historians, archaeologists, and of the Project consultant, Fray Eugenio Martin Torres, is that the building of the church and its associated monastery was indeed directed by the Dominicans. Much more will be known of this highly important development as work advances in 2006 (Figures 44, 45).

Conclusions

Prehispanic Yucundaa was a large, internally diversified, but integrated, urban settlement, which served as the capital of the señorío of Teposcolula, a small state containing some 15 communities. After an exhaustive survey of the site, Laura Stiver (2001: 306), postulated a Postclassic period Yucundaa population of over 7200. Excavations are providing evidence that this estimate may be somewhat conservative, and in 2006 efforts will be directed toward a more accurate calculation of total population of the site. Yucundaa and its polity had strong political, social, and economic relations with other Mixteca states, such as Yanhuitlan, Tilantongo, Tlaxiaco, Coixtlahuaca, Tamazulapan, Tejupan, and even Tututepec, far to the south on the Pacific Coast. Should our hypothesis regarding the Gran Calzada and the related system of caves be substantiated by investigations scheduled for 2006, it is virtually certain that Yucuñdaa was also an important regional ritual-ceremonial center, as well.

For some three centuries after the Spanish Conquest, San Pedro y San Pablo Teposcolula continued to serve as functioning city, the cabecera of the señorío of Teposcolula and the most important Spanish regional administrative center between Oaxaca and Puebla. Although Yucundaa is an impressively large and complex Postclassic settlement, what is perhaps most significant from the cultural-historical standpoint is that it is the best example yet found in Oaxaca of a transitional Prehispanic-early Colonial urban center. It captures very precisely the transformation which occurred between the mid-1520's and 1550 when the population of the town, much reduced by devastating epidemics, was moved from Yucundaa to the valley floor below.

As we consider the settlement, life, and development of Yucundaa, it is essential to recognize that the city is the product of the Mixtec people who lived there. It was planned by them and formed according to their values and their spiritual, socio-political and economic requirements. It reflects those values and needs, but, at the same time, the physical settlement shaped and channeled the behavior of its inhabitants for generations. The city was built and maintained by the Mixtecs, and later modified by the Spanish, but it also served as a guide to the behavior of its inhabitants. We can consider Yucundaa as a kind of 'roadmap', or guide, for its residents. Settlements and institutions are created by people, but, at the same time, those settlements and institutions channel and determine their behavior. Yucundaa, then, was produced by the Mixtecs, but as an important urban political, social, economic, and ritual center, it influenced and determined who and what they were.

Much remains to be done and said about Yucundaa, and investigations will continue until at least the end of 2006, with analysis, publication of findings, and consolidation and preservation of the site continuing into 2007. After two complete seasons, it is clear that the Project is meeting its objectives of investigating a total functioning city as it developed and underwent transformation. We believe that the results of the project will revolutionize our understanding of Mixtec civilization and the complex transformations occurring in the region during very early Spanish colonial times (Figures 46, 47).
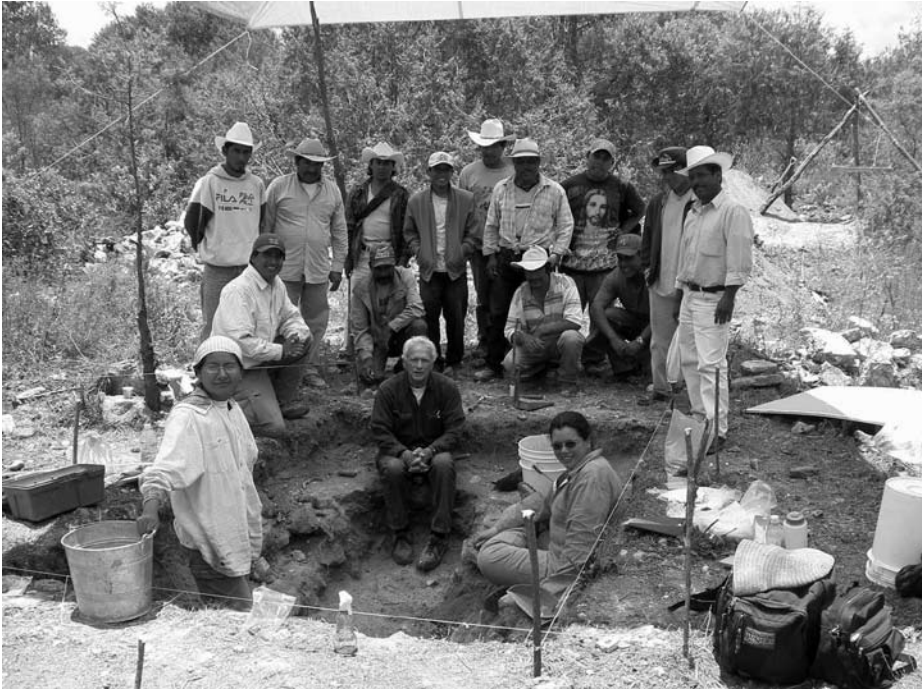
Figure 46. Excavation crew in the Gran Plaza, 2004.
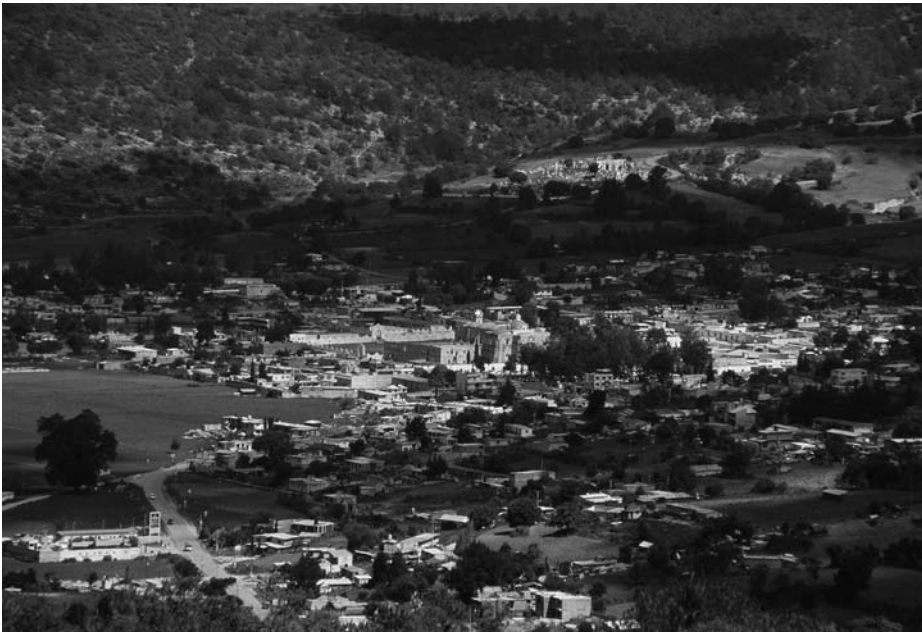
Figure 47. The "Pueblo Nuevo" of San Pedro y San Pablo Teposcolula, as seen from Yucundaa, 2005

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Gilda Hernández Sánchez

Feasting, Community, and Codex Style Ceramics

During the last two centuries before the Spanish conquest (1521), artists from central and south Mexico produced fine elaborately painted vessels with motifs similar to those of the pre-colonial codices of Mesoamerica. Today these vessels are qualified with the term 'codex-style', part of the pan-Mesoamerican 'Mixteca-Puebla stylistic tradition'. Since the beginning of the twentieth century, scholars have recognized that this was one of the most aesthetic and important ceramic styles of Mesoamerica and that its painted motifs contain information about ancient cosmovision. No one, however, had made an extensive study of the iconography. A recent analysis of a wide sample of these vessels indicates that people from the Mixtec region, the central valleys of Oaxaca, the Puebla-Tlaxcala valley and central Veracruz used many of these artifacts as serving vessels in ritual contexts. The study of their painted iconography suggests that the messages alluded to central notions in the context of ceremonial feasting. I propose that many of these vessels were used as serving dishes in feasting, that is, ritualized banquets where food was a prime medium of social interaction and symbolic expression, and that their painted images refer to concepts which were particularly relevant and meaningful in the context of such ceremonies.

In traditional societies feasting is an essential component of community life. Such ritualized communal banquets where food is the main medium of communication and symbolic expression have a major role in social relations. They create solidarity, and at the same time are the main arenas to manifest social differentiation. In Mesoamerica, as in many other regions of the world, feasting was, and still is, one of the most important cultural processes at community level. Early colonial documents frequently indicate that collective banquets were central elements in festivities of the ritual calendar, celebrations of the nobility and the government, and familiar observances. As early chroniclers note, sixteenth century feasts in central Mesoamerica consisted of elaborate ceremonies with many guests, often with speeches and dances, while a great deal of time was invested in the preparation of special foods and drinks.

In pre-Hispanic Mesoamerica, objects for ritual purposes, including those involved in feasting, were often decorated with visual motifs. In this region of the world image and text were strongly intertwined. Clusters of motifs were not only decoration, but also a pictographic imagery that communicated important messages. The surviving pre-colonial books and carved-stone monuments show that pictography referred to

prognostication, ritual practice, sacred and dynastic history, and to the divine character of rulers. It is probable that the images on artifacts used in ancient feasts also conveyed important messages. Thus, codex-style serving vessels offer a fascinating opportunity to approach the character of feasts in ancient Mesoamerican communities. An excellent case are the so-called codex-style ceramics from the State of Oaxaca and adjacent regions in Mexico.

The Codex-Style Vessels

Several decades ago, Donald Robertson (1961: 4) coined the term 'codex-style' for the assemblage of polychrome and lustrous ceramics of the Late Postclassic period (AD 1250-1521) from central and southern Mexico, as the painted motifs were of the same representational technique of the pictorial manuscripts. Indeed, the painted images are similar to those of the Postclassic codices as well as to the mural paintings from the present-day Mexican states of Puebla, Tlaxcala, Oaxaca and Veracruz. This distinctive art form and iconography was called Mixteca-Puebla style. It was characterized by colorful and symmetrical images with precise delineation, with an extensive but standardized iconographical corpus, its most representative example being the codex Borgia (Nicholson 1966, 1982, 2001; Nicholson and Quiñones 1994; Smith 2003; Smith and Heath-Smith 1980).

Modern interest in codex-style vessels, however, began in the early twentieth century with Eduard Seler (1908: 522), who had already recognized that the motifs depicted on these vessels were part of the iconographic corpus of the surviving Mixtec codices. Later, Hermann Beyer (1969: 469) proposed that their high quality and decoration suggested a ceremonial use. Both insights continue to be important in the current literature (Chadwick 1971: 240; Contreras 1994: 12; McCafferty 1994: 72; Müller 1978; Nicholson 1982: 243; Pohl 2003; Quiñones 1994; Ramsey 1982; Smith and Heath-Smith 1980: 33). The first extensive study dedicated to this ceramic style was conducted by Michael Lind (1994), who compared samples of vessels from different areas in the Mixteca-Puebla region.

Between 2000 and 2005 I examined a large sample of codex-style vessels at Leiden University in order to explore the meaning of their iconography (Hernández 2005). The sample consisted of 467 codex-style vessels, or large fragments of them, from the Puebla-Tlaxcala Valley (43.04%), the Mixtec region (6.21%), the central valleys of Oaxaca (10.71%), the central part of the state of Veracruz (12.85%) and the basin of Mexico (3.42%). objects. All vessels were already known (forming part of existing collections) and accessible for study.

Codex-style vessels are particularly interesting because they are more elaborately decorated than other contemporary local pottery in the above-mentioned regions. These vessels represent between 2% and 5% of the ceramic artifacts recovered in domestic contexts (Lind 1994: 86). The analysis of the iconography and morphology of these

artifacts suggests that: 1) the painted images contain information about their function, 2) the vessels were used in feasting, and 3) the painted messages referred to important concepts in those ceremonies.

Pictography and ritual function of the Codex-Style Vessels

The polychrome motifs painted on codex-style vessels represent objects and actions, forming a system of images known as pictography (Dibble 1971: 324). Most of the motifs are standardized icons with a meaningful color. In general, we may call them ideograms since they refer to qualities or ideas associated with the painted objects. They are not illustrating a text as phonetic symbols; rather they are transmitting information through their associated meanings.

The analysis of the sample made it possible to distinguish several groups of codex-style vessels according to their painted decoration. Each of the categories exhibits a standard arrangement of signs, which are usually organized in bands around the vessel. These complexes of signs form iconographical themes, which seem to refer ideographically to many ritual practices in Mesoamerica and related concepts, such as piety, offering, contacting the world of the deities, preciousness, darkness, mystery, blood offering or warrior's courage (Hernández 2004b: 11). Some complexes are associated with certain vessel forms and/or with certain geographical areas. Therefore it is probable that these groups of signs were not mere decoration.

The most frequent complex of the sample is the 'Solar Band complex' (Hernández 2004a). It is defined by an orange band with red vertical lines, which is part of the representation of the sun in Postclassic iconography (Figure 1). Usually the instruments of auto-sacrifice – agave thorns and bone awls – are painted on this band. Beneath it appears another band with feathers and/or a band of step-fret motifs, which have been identified as indicators of nobility or rulership. This complex appears most commonly depicted on plates, everted tripod bowls and craters, as well as on a few tripod jars, goblets and hemispherical bowls; however it does not appear on other vessel forms. This complex occurs only on vessels from the Puebla-Tlaxcala valley.
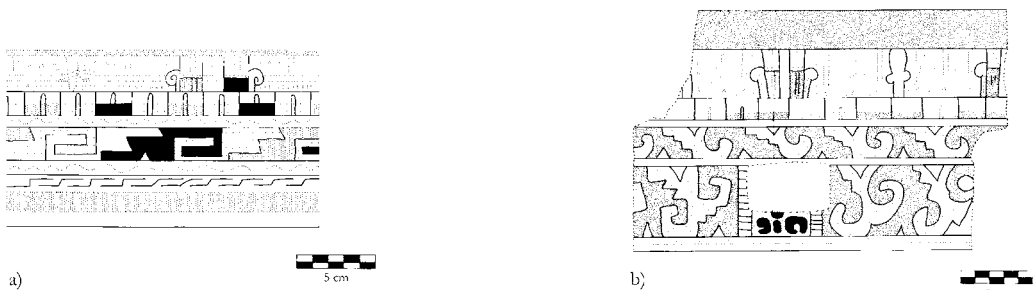
Figure 1. Iconography of the Solar Band complex painted on: a) exterior of a hemispherical bowl from Cholula, b) exterior of a crater from Cholula.
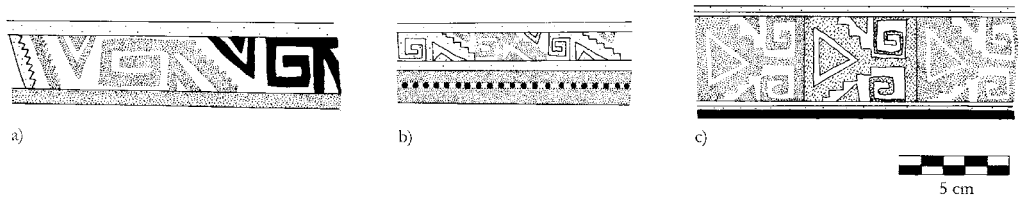
Figure 2. Iconography of the complex of Nobility painted on: a) exterior wall of a tripod everted bowl from Huitzo, b) exterior of a tripod jar from Huitzo, c) exterior of tripod everted bowl from Apoala.
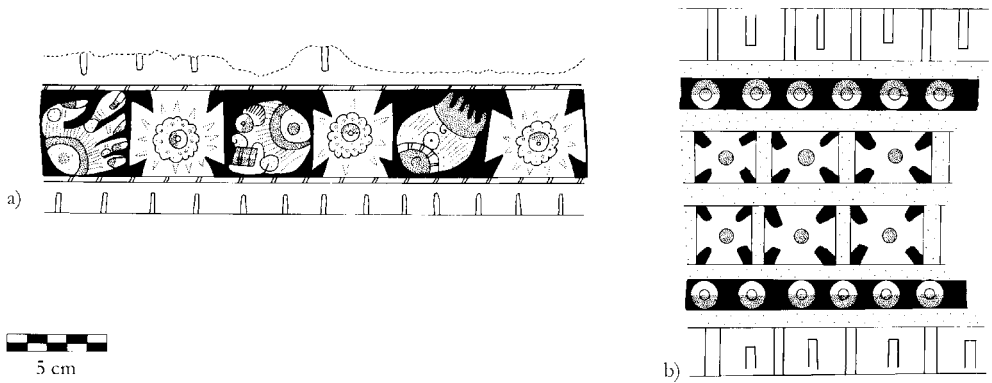
Figure 3. Iconography of the complex of Death and Tlillan painted on: a) exterior of a bi-conical vase from Piedras Negras, Ver., b) exterior of a bi-conical vase without provenance.

In contrast, the complex of 'Nobility', defined by bands of step-fret motifs (Figure 2), appears mostly on tripod jars, tripod everted bowls and goblets; however not on plates and craters, as is typical of the Solar Band complex. This design can be found mainly in the central valleys of Oaxaca and the Mixtec region, although it occurs infrequently in the Puebla-Tlaxcala region. In the Mixtec codices a frame with similar motifs represents town or people (*ñuu*) and accordingly connotes nobility and people of royal lineage, seated on this sign as rulers (Jansen and Pérez Jiménez 2000: 14)

The complex called 'Death and Tlillan' is characterized by signs that belong to the iconography of death and the underworld. Among them the signs of the death temple *tlillan*: white Malta crosses on a dark background (Figure 3). This imagery is notoriously more common on vases, but is not represented on plates, jars or tripod everted bowls. Furthermore, it is more frequently found in central Veracruz and absent in Oaxaca.

The other complexes detected in the sample exhibit relationships to specific vessel forms and/or to specific geographic areas too. All of this suggests a connection of iconography, vessel form and provenance, which implies that the painted signs were meaningful.

The signs most likely refer to the ritual use of the vessels. It is significant that dates are not represented on the vessels, nor are other calendarical data, geographical places or personal names, which normally allude to historical events or to prognostication. As well, scenes describing events or referring to important episodes of sacred history are not evident. Many of these signs have a religious connotation, while others are qualifiers of preciousness and nobility. My conclusion is that they most likely refer to notions that are important in ceremonial contexts.

In comparison to codices and mural paintings of the same style, the vessels have few signs. They are represented and organized in a standard manner and are repeated several times around the vessels. Most are well-known symbols of the central and south Mesoamerican iconography of the Postclassic Period. The majority of these symbols are qualifiers and other substantives related to ritual concepts. In other words, the short messages were codified in a simple manner, using easily recognizable elements that made them accessible to a large audience, making it possible that the messages were understood by the original users and participants in the ceremonies.

Codex-Style Vessels as Serving Ware

The shape of codex-style vessels suggests a ritual use too. Some of the vessel forms are censers and god effigies that in Mesoamerica are known to represent ritual paraphernalia. The majority of the ceramics are designed as serving vessels (Figure 4), meaning that some are appropriate for individual drinking, such as goblets, tripod jars, vases and hemispherical bowls, while other were intended for individual eating, such as plates, tripod bowls and hemispherical bowls. Some of the forms are apt for communal serving of food and drink, such as pitchers, craters and large bowls with composite silhouette. In view of their shape and high quality, it is highly probable that they were used as serving ware for feasting. However, it is just as likely that some of the vessels were containers for offerings of food, drink or other substances, a use that is demonstrated by scenes in the codices, archaeological evidence (e.g. burials) and by ceremonial practices in present-day traditional communities.

Thus, most of the codex-style vessels of the sample could have been used for serving at feasts. Early colonial chronicles describe how feasting was an essential element of Mesoamerican community life. Festivities of the ritual calendar, ceremonies of government and other public celebrations included big ritualized events in which food and drink were of crucial importance and a means to express social and ritual relationships. In the current anthropological literature such occasions are defined as feasting (Dietler and Hayden 2001: 3). In recent years there has been an increasing interest in their study since it has been recognized that they are important arenas for the representation of social relations (Bray 2003; Dietler 1996; Dietler and Hayden 2001). On one side, they are mechanisms of social solidarity because they stimulate the sense of communitas, and
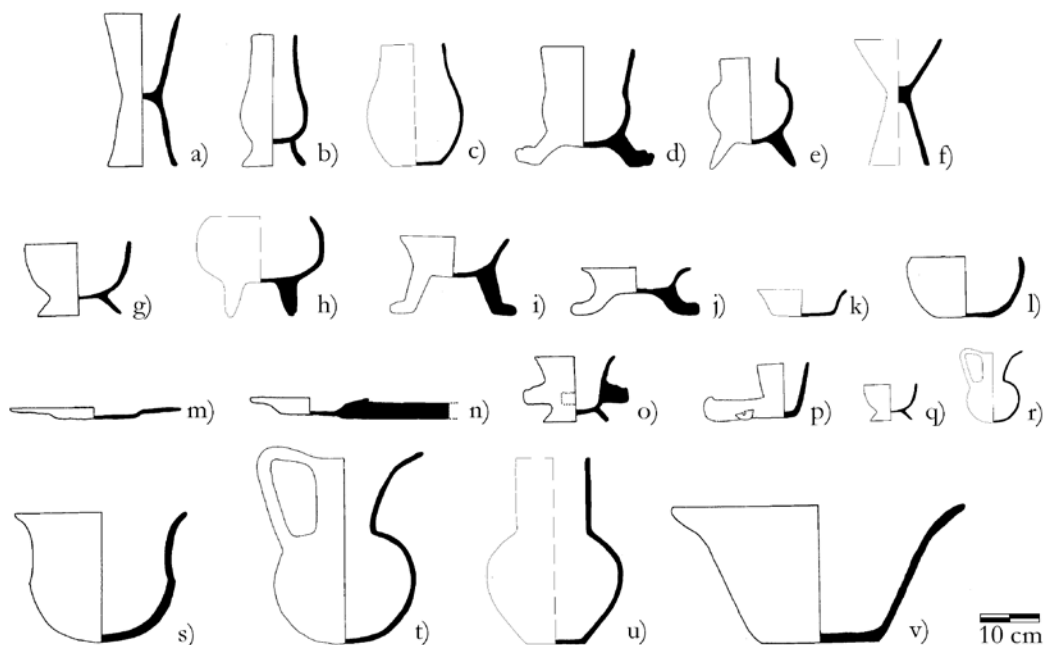
Figure 4. Vessel's forms identified in the sample of study: a, b) bi-conical vase; c) vase; d) tripod vase; e) tripod jar; f) bi-conic goblet; g) goblet; h) tripod bowl; i, j) everted tripod bowl; k) everted bowl; l) hemispherical bowl; m) plate; n, o, p) censer; q, r) miniatures; s) composite silhouette bowl; t) pitcher; u) long neck bottle, and v) crater.

on the other, they help to legitimize and formalize unequal power and status relations (Dietler 1996: 91, 96, 97). In these ritualized events the dramatic effect is an important element for the transmission of meanings, for that reason the banquets generally include speeches, dances and songs. The colorful and lustrous codex-style vessels very likely contributed to enhance the significance and impact of those ceremonies.

Although little information exists about the archaeological context of these vessels, the existing data support the proposal that they might be involved in feasting. These vessels were present in many different locations, such as construction fills of temples and other public areas, household areas in noble neighbourhoods or in the periphery of settlements, as well as burials and domestic trash pits (Hernández 2005). This indicates that people used them in public and domestic affairs. Late pre-colonial grand communal feasts were most likely celebrated in public areas close to temples or palaces, while feasts of smaller dimensions, like familial celebrations, certainly took place in domestic areas.
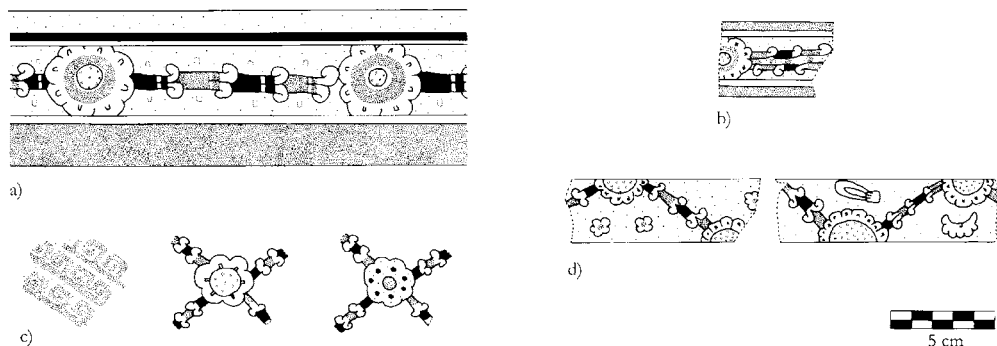
Figure 5. Vessels with iconography referring to flower and song: a) exterior of a goblet from Cholula, b) exterior of goblet from Tizatlán, c) exterior of a jar from Cholula, d) exterior wall of a hemispherical bowl from Cholula.

Messages on Codex-Style Serving Ware

The study of the messages depicted on codex-style vessels allows us to identify some of the ideas that were important in the context of those ceremonies. Different messages were painted on these vessels were painted, suggesting that they were not a uniform group of objects for any purpose or everyday use. Some of the most commonly depicted signs refer to preciousness, to the invocation of powerful forces, to entering in contact with the divinity, and to piety.

1) Preciousness

Numerous codex-style vessels are decorated with well-known Mesoamerican symbols for beauty, nobility and high value, which can be synthesized as the notion of preciousness. For example, the above-mentioned vessels of the Nobility complex depict step-frets as central elements, referring to the rulers of a community. Another group of vessels exhibit a complex of signs that seems to represent flower and song (Figure 5). The vessels have depicted flowers tied with chains of volutes. These volutes seem to indicate speech or song, since in codices words or melodies emerging from the mouth of personages are represented in this way (e.g., Borbonicus 1991: 4, 5, 7; Borgia 1993: 40, 47; Vindobonensis 1992: 38). The combination of flower and song formed a well-known Nahuatl *difrasismo* (hendiadys) for poetry or literary speech: *in xochitl in cuicatl* (León Portilla 1970: 75). The use of such difrasismos ('speaking in pairs') is a characteristic of ceremonial speech (see the contributions by Pérez Jiménez and López García, this volume).

On other vessels we observe flowers, particularly the *cacaloxochitl* (Plumeri Rubra, cf. de la Cruz 1991: Pl. 53), a flower specifically reserved for the lords because of its beauty and delicate fragrance (Sahagún 1992, XI, Ch. 7: 692). Thus, these signs on the vessels very likely referred to beautiful, precious and aromatic matters.
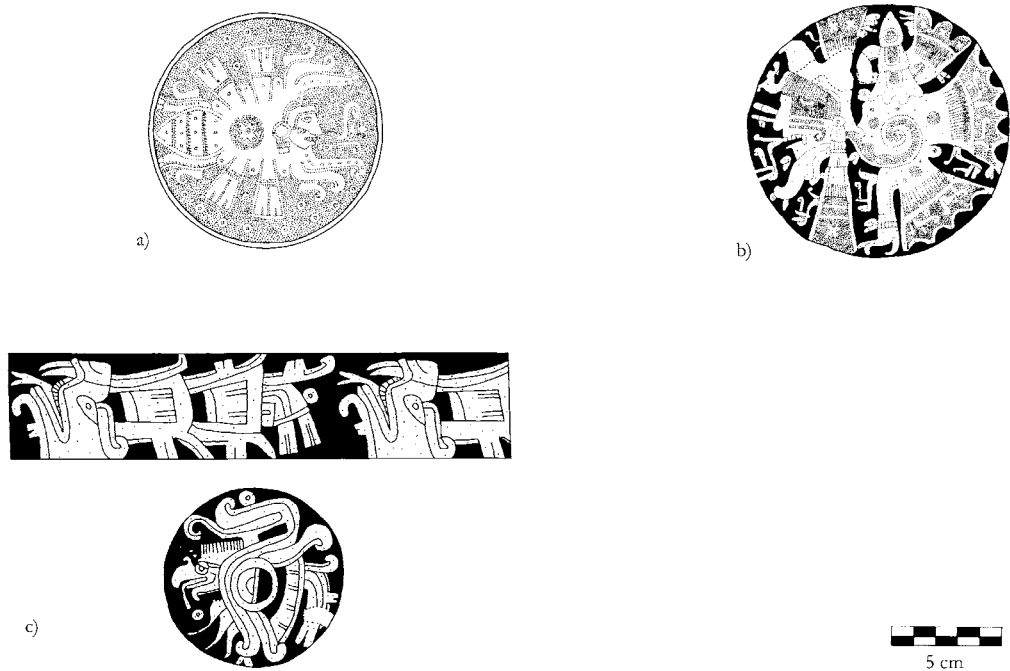
Figure 6. Iconography related to nahuales painted on: a) plate from Zaachila, b) plate from Ocotelulco, c) interior wall and bottom of an everted tripod bowl from Nochixtlan, d) wall and bottom of a plate from Cholula.

Decorations with step-frets, flowers and poetry, being well-known symbols of preciousness, characterized the vessels themselves as precious, and, qualify them as generally appropiate for different kinds of festive celebrations and banquets.

2) Invocation to Powerful Forces

A number of codex-style vessels are decorated with Mesoamerican powerful beings, such as *nahuales* or the *ñuhu* (Earth Spirits) of the Mixtec region, which suggests that they were significant items in the context of religious feasting. In one group of vessels several personages are depicted with the characteristics of different creatures, giving the impression that they are in the process of transformation into another being. In the Mesoamerican context the combination of human and animal elements may be interpreted as a reference to *nahualism*, i.e. the complex of convictions according to which human individuals have one or more animal companions (*nahuales*) in nature, into which they may transform themselves during a state of trance or dreaming, and with which they share experiences (Nutini and Roberts 1993: 43, 45; see also the contributions by Jansen and Witter, this volume). In illustrative reference is the statement by the commentator of the Codex Telleriano-Remensis (1995: 12v) about those who were born during the

thirteen-day period patronized by Tonatiuh (Sun) and Tecciztecatl (Moon): 'they would be magicians for they tried hard to transform themselves into the shapes of various animals.'

One specific plate, for example, depicts a butterfly that presents a small human face instead of the common insect head (Figure 6). The elaborate volute coming from its mouth indicates that it is speaking or singing. The tail contains a flint similar to that of the fire serpent, a powerful *nahual* known as *yahui* in the Mixtec region or *xiuhcoatl* in the Nahua area, who was the protector of the nobility (Anders, Jansen and Reyes 1993: 83).

On the bottom of one tripod bowl an eagle is depicted as emerging from the jaws of a serpent, while on the vessel's walls fire serpents are represented, identified by their typical trapezoidal tails.

On another plate we find the painting of a snail with butterfly wings and claws; from its mouth emerges the face of Tezcatlipoca.

These three complex images seem to represent different beings in the process of transformation, or beings that combine characteristics of diverse powerful creatures. Although today butterflies are not recognized as powerful, it is likely that in ancient Mesoamerica their meaning was important. Cloaks with butterfly designs, *papalotilmatli* in Nahuatl, were required in temples (Sahagún 1997: 117). Warriors wore back insignias in the form of butterflies as the Primeros Memoriales (Sahagún 1997: 72r, 74r, 74v) and the Matrícula de Tributos (Berdan and Anawalt 1992: 22r, 23v) illustrate. Dead warriors were supposed to transform into them (Sahagún 1952, III App., Ch. 3: 47). Butterflies were associated with the Mexica Goddess Itzpapalotl, the Obsidian Butterfly, who seems to hold the power of the obsidian arrowheads. Consequently, butterflies possessed special qualities to protect warriors or to support religious ceremonies in temples. It is likely that the butterflies painted on the vessels alluded to these concepts.

Another group of vessels were decorated with images of the *ñuhu*, the Mixtec term for the stony being that represents the Earth Spirit and the divine in general (Anders, Jansen and van der Loo 1994: 80). According to Jansen (1982:186), the *ñuhu* are considered by modern Mixtecs to be the owners and inhabitants of specific places, such as the river, the cornfield or the mountain. They are considered a single being and multiple beings at the same time. Although on the vessels the ñuhu is painted in a simplified manner, we recognize this being because of its typical round eyes and prominent teeth in combination with the protuberances on its head, as it is represented in the codices (e.g., Vindobonensis 1992: 17, 24, 27) (Figure 7). Several vessels exhibit groups of four *ñuhu*, possibly implying a reference to the four directions. On one tripod jar the band with four ñuhu was combined with a band of fire serpents.

The first group of vessels may refer to the extraordinary powers of the *nahuales*, who could transform themselves and transcend their physical limits to reach the other world (Jansen 1997a: 31). It is likely that these vessels were used in feasts where the assistance of these forces was important, such as banquets associated with religious, military or
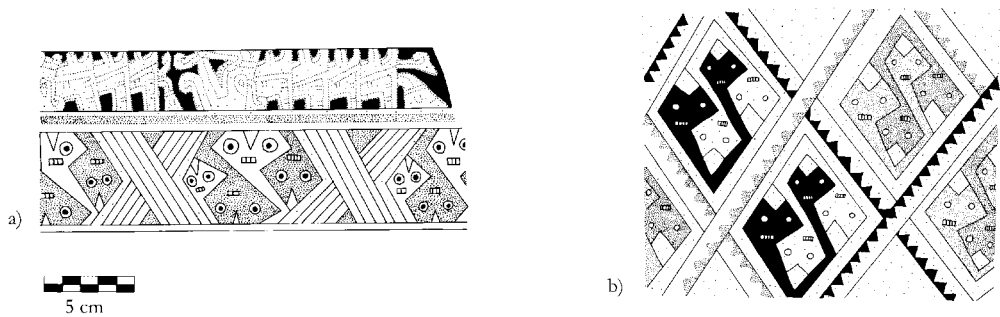
Figure 7. Iconography referring to Ñuhu painted on: a) exterior of a tripod jar from Cuicatlan, b) exterior of a tripod vase without provenance.

Figure 8. Iconography of smoke: a, b, c) different forms of smoke volutes, d) exterior of a goblet from Cholula.

governmental activities. On the second group of vessels the painted images may have been an invocation of (or a prayer to) to the owners and custodians of the places. In the Mixtec region 'feeding the *ñuhu*' is still a widespread custom that consists of offering food and drink to the Earth Spirit in order to improve the harvest (Jansen 1982: 184). It is possible that some of these vessels were used in feasts with such a purpose.

3) Contacting the Divinity

Several vessels of the sample were decorated with bands with series of orange volutes on black background, similar to the convention to represent smoke in codices (e.g., Borgia 1993: 14; Vatican B 1993: 19, 20, 31) (Figure 8). Iin Mesoamerica smoke was, and still is, one of the most common media to contact the divinity. In addition, some vessels are painted with bands of precious stones or step-frets, which allude to the concepts of preciousness and nobility.

On a few vessels the smoke is represented as a long snake with volutes that extends across the vessel surface (Figure 9). In ancient Mesoamerica the serpent could represent a visionary experience during ritual trance (Furst 1976: 186; Jansen 1997a: 32). This was associated with auto-sacrifice, as is evident in the well-known Lintel 15 of Yaxchilan where a serpent with volutes emerges from a vessel filled with papers that are sprinkled with the blood from auto-sacrifice (Furst 1976: 186). On a stone monument from Huilocintla, Veracruz, we see a long serpent with volutes in a scene where

　　　　　　　　　Feasting, Community, and Codex Style Ceramics

Figure 9. Iconography referring to the smoke serpent: a) exterior of a tripod jar from Tututepec, b) exterior of a tripod jar from Oaxaca.

an individual is perforating his tongue (Seler 1908: 2; Jansen 1997b). The reference to smoke in the decoration, thererefore, may indicate the use of such vessels in rituals of trance and auto-sacrifice.

Burning resins or other substances was a valued offering, and an essential part of most of the ceremonies (Sahagún 1992, II App. 3: 164-165). The smoke was the medium to enter into contacts with the gods and the other world. Durán (1971: 104) describes a quotidian incense ritual:

These priests went back and forth to the idol constantly, offering it incense, and every time the incense was burned, each raised his arm as high as he could. This ceremony was in honor of the god and of the sun, who were asked to grant that all these prayers and please rise to heaven, just as the perfumed smoke rose.

Where smoke is depicted on the vessels, it likely referred to the encounter between humans and gods, since it transported prayers to the place of the gods and nourished them. In the case of the vessels with long smoke serpents, the reference to that contact was linked to ritual trance produced by auto-sacrifice. However, this does not imply that smoke was produced smoke in or with the vessels themselves. Most of the forms were not designed specifically as incense burners, as the majority of the sample are goblets, pitchers, vases, everted bowls or plates. The smoke painted on the vessels most likely indicated that they were part of feasts where people sought contact with the divinity.

4) Piety

The most frequent complex of the sample is the Solar Band complex. As previously noted, the identifying element is a band representing the sun (Figure 10). Needless to recall that the sun in Mesoamerica was the principle of life (e.g. Telleriano-Remensin 1995: 12v) and symbolized sacredness and divinity. Several Nahuatl toponyms that contain the particle *teotl*, 'god', or *teoyotl*, sacredness, are represented in the Codex Mendocino with a solar disc similar to that painted on the vessels. For example, the glyph of
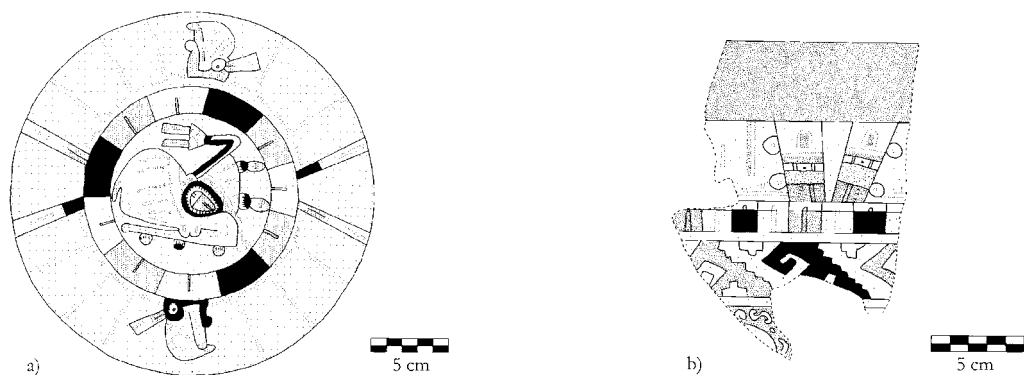
Figure 10. Iconography of the Solar Band complex on: a) plate from Cholula, b) exterior of a crater from Tizatlán.

Teoaçingo (Mendocino 1992: 16r), 'on the small sacred water', consists of a half solar disc (*teo-*), a water basin (*a-*) and the lower limbs of a man (*tzin-*).

Usually, agave thorns and bone awls are painted on the solar band of the vessels. These are the typical instruments of auto-sacrifice and appear in the codices to indicate acts of ritual purification ('penitence') and to symbolize related concepts such as piety, (Jansen 1998: 144; Nowotny 1961: 27). Probably both signs formed a well-known *difrasismo*, since the Central Mexican codices the frequently present them as a pair (e.g., Borbonicus 1991: 5; Borgia 1993: 18, 19, 22, 23; Nuttall 1992: 21). On some vessels, thorns and awls appear in combination with signs referring to preciousness and nobility, such as precious stones, flowers, ears of corn, pheasant heads and sunrays

Beneath this band another band was painted with colorful feathers that are common indicators of preciousness and nobility. Sometimes below, or in place of the feathered band, one might find yet another band with step-fret motifs that, as we saw earlier, allude to the town, and by extension to the rulers and the nobility.

A central sign was usually depicted on the bottom of plates and everted bowls; the most common being an eagle head. In Central Mexican iconography it was considered to represent the sun (Seler 1963. I: 126). Thus, this complex of signs may be interpreted as a reference to piety and to offerings in honor of the sun, as well as to sacred beings in general, with the connotation of nobility and preciousness. This suggests that the vessels were used in feasts where piety and offering were important elements.

Discussion

The motifs painted on codex-style vessels were meaningful. That is, the signs conformed a pictography referring to ritual activities and related concepts, and in many cases they alluded to the ceremonial use of the vessel. The majority of these artifacts, as their form

and high quality suggests, were serving ware for feasting. Thus, their iconography most likely referred to meaningful notions in the context of those celebrations. The original users and beholders of these vessels must have understood the painted messages, given that most of them are well-known symbols of the Postclassic iconography of central and southern Mexico.

The detailed signs, which were carefully painted on the codex-style vessels, likely transmitted notions that were specially meaningful and relevant in the ceremonies for which the vessels were made. An important aspect of the use of symbols is to distinguish feasts from daily meals (Dietler and Hayden 2001: 9). For example, consuming special food, using particular decoration or presenting certain dances distinguishes a ritual banquet from a common meal. Most likely, codex-style vessels, as carriers of relevant symbols, had the same function. They were efficient media since they had a practical use during the meal, and at the same time their decoration communicated well-known concepts related to the ceremony.

Diverse themes can be identified in the decoration of the vessels, which suggests that not one specific but different messages were transmitted. Possibly, there existed particular serving wares with specific messages for certain ritual banquets. The sample of vessels studied here contains vessels that refer to preciousness, invocation to powerful forces, entering into contact with the divinity, or piety. It is probable that they were used in different ceremonies. Although these banquets were festive occasions, the communication with the divinity and the other world was sought, as the vessels with signs referring to *nahuales*, *ñuhu* or smoke suggest. As well, some feasts were pious events as the vessels with the solar band indicate.

In Mesoamerica, ceremonial feasting was, and still is, an important arena to show both communal solidarity and social differentiation. In this context, codex-style vessels were good indices of communal affiliation. Surely after the feast, as still is custom in Mexico, the guests took home their *itacate*, that is some vessels with an extra portion of food. Some of such containers could have been the fine codex-style vessels presented here. They probably were good indices of communal affiliation since their presence and frequency in a household would indicate that their inhabitants were often, or not, guests of such banquets. In addition, vessels with higher quality would signal that their owner had a higher status in the community.

In brief, codex-style vessels were one of the elements of communal integration in the region of the Mixteca-Puebla style. They were vessels for feasting, and transmitted messages connected to and relevant for those ceremonies.

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Juan José Batalla Rosado

Un Glifo de la Tradición Escrituraria Mixteca: el signo 'cerro' con doble voluta

Las escrituras mesoamericanas correspondientes a las áreas culturales mixteca y de Centro de México, que conocemos sobre todo a través de los códices, presentan el mismo signo definitorio para 'cerro'. Además, su presencia nos indica, en la mayor parte de los casos, que nos encontramos ante un glifo cuya información se corresponde con un topónimo o nombre de lugar.

Para la zona mixteca quien mejor se ha ocupado de su estudio ha sido Mary E. Smith (1973) definiendo el signo del siguiente modo:

> The sign for the Mixtec word yucu or 'hill' is essentially a conventionalized 'picture' of a hill. It is usually a green or brown bell-shaped form on a base that consists of a narrow red or blue band, bellow which there is often a yellow scalloped border. At times, the lower corners of the hill sign curl inward, forming volutes on either side. Often the outline of the hill shape is broken by small curvilinear or rectilinear projections which indicate the roughness or 'bumpiness' of the hill (Smith 1973: 39).

Esta investigadora también compara el signo mixteco *yucu* con el utilizado en la escritura náhuatl. Llega a la conclusión de que 'the Náhuatl pictorial sign for 'hill' is basically the same as its Mixtec counterpart', si bien 'it does not represent one single word-unit as the Mixtec sign represents the word *yucu*. Rather, it usually represents *tepec*, a combination of the word *tepetl* ('hill') and the locative suffix -c, meaning 'in' (Smith 1973: 40).

Estamos de acuerdo con la definición que establece Mary E. Smith del signo 'cerro' en ambas escrituras, pero no mantenemos su apreciación sobre la lectura en escritura náhuatl. Así, en náhuatl el signo debe ser leído como *tepetl*-'cerro', nunca *tepec*, aunque en contexto escriturario funciona como un logograma cuya interpretación es TEPE. El sufijo -c indicativo de topónimo realmente no está escrito. Esto es algo muy habitual en Centro de México, pues aunque tenían un glifo (*comitl*-'vasija') que ofrecía la terminación -*c* o -*co* generalmente no lo escribían, pues el contexto indica en la mayor parte de los casos que la palabra es un topónimo. De este modo, las gramáticas de la lengua náhuatl únicamente recogen como sufijo locativo -c/-co, ya que la unión con el logograma TEPE nos ofrece el término *tepec* cuya traducción es 'sobre el cerro' (véase, por ejemplo, Launey 1992: 115-123).

Para el Centro de México también tenemos estudios sobre el signo *tepetl*-'cerro'. Así, Leonardo Manrique Castañeda (1996) lo denomina grafema N15, presentando un amplio estudio del mismo. Su definición de *tepetl*-'cerro' es la siguiente:

> Tiene esta representación de un cerro la silueta general acampanada; en su parte inferior la curva que la describe se vuelve en ambos lados hacia el interior, en una breve espiral que toca una orla roja que por arriba y a izquierda y derecha, pero no por abajo, contornea un estrecho rectángulo amarillo (...), la curva acampanada no es continua, sino que a la mitad de su altura aproximadamente forma tres pequeños arcos salientes a un lado y a otro (...) -no son en realidad tres arcos los que sobresalen a los lados, sino solamente el central, los otros dos son espiralados (...) (Manrique 1996: 103).

Posteriormente, describiendo diversas alteraciones al contorno de la silueta del signo *tepetl* señala que la 'más interesante consiste en que la cima, en vez de describir una curva simple lleva los tres arcos que figuran a los lados de la mayoría de las representaciones –incidentalmente diré que estos arquitos parecen característicos de los dibujos de ciertas cosas duras: cerros, piedras, huesos' (Manrique 1996: 105).

La conclusión que podemos obtener del análisis del signo *yucu* y *tepetl* en las escrituras mixteca y náhuatl es que se realizan de igual manera y que destaca por esas protuberancias o volutas que sobresalen en diversas partes de su contorno, generalmente a ambos lados. También hemos de resaltar que, como ya había indicado Mary E. Smith (1973: 39), las volutas de la escritura mixteca pueden ser tanto curvilíneas como rectilíneas, pudiendo aparecer, como veremos, de las dos formas en el mismo glifo. En nuestra opinión estas volutas son un elemento más de la escritura logosilábica indígena, señalando el signo *yuu* en mixteco o *tetl* en náhuatl, es decir, 'piedra'. Independientemente de la consideración de la escritura mixteca o náhuatl dentro de la teoría general del funcionamiento de una escritura y del menor o mayor desarrollo de las mismas con que cada investigador quiere definirlas, consideramos que las volutas son un complemento fonético. Así, tanto en la escritura mixteca como en la náhuatl nos ofrecen la sílaba *yu* y *te*, respectivamente. De este modo no hay posibilidad de error, pues las volutas nos indican que el logograma comienza por *yu* o *te* y por tanto deben leerse YUCU y TEPE.

Ahora bien, aunque la representación del 'cerro' en ambas escrituras parece idéntica, sí hay una diferencia que encontramos dependiendo del área de estudio. Podemos afirmar que una de las características de la escritura mixteca es que generalmente en el signo *yucu* utiliza una 'doble voluta', mientras que la náhuatl para plasmar *tepetl* siempre usa tres o ninguna, en ningún caso se recogen dos. No obstante, como tendremos ocasión de comprobar los mixtecos también utilizan la triple voluta e incluso ninguna, aunque su uso se da de forma más abundante en época colonial. A través de los ejemplos que veremos a continuación podremos inferir dos afirmaciones principales sobre la representación del *yucu* o *tepetl*:

1ª la doble voluta sólo aparece en documentos mixtecos,
2ª la doble voluta aparece sobre todo en documentos prehispánicos
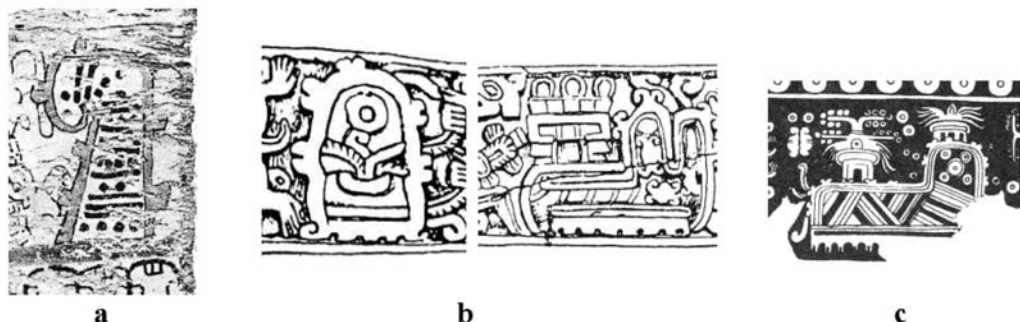
Figura 1. Cerros con doble voluta. a) Página 57 del Códice Tro-cortesiano. b) Huesos tallados de la Tumba 7 de Monte Albán, c) Pintura Mural de Mitla.

Por último, hemos de indicar que creemos haber encontrado la presencia de la doble voluta en el área maya. Con toda seguridad aparece representada en algunos árboles (véase Códice Dresde páginas 25, 27, 29, 30, etc; y Códice Tro-cortesiano páginas 24, 42 a 49, 89, 91, etc). Como veremos también tenemos ejemplos en la escritura mixteca de este elemento en árboles. En cuanto al glifo o signo iconográfico de cerro con voluta en el área maya pensamos que un único ejemplo de ello se puede dar en la página 57 del Códice Trocortesiano (Figura 1a), aunque ningún especialista de esta cultura lo interpreta como tal. De ser así, no cabe duda que su interpretación es la de 'cerro torcido' con todas las implicaciones que puede tener con otras áreas culturales mesoamericanas.

Por ello, mantenemos que la doble voluta es característica de la cultura mixteca, si bien podemos encontrar antecedentes entre los mayas.

La doble voluta mixteca

Este elemento de la escritura mixteca no aparece únicamente en los códices. En huesos tallados, como los encontrados en la Tumba 7 de Monte Albán, vemos la representación del yucu con la doble voluta, tanto curvilínea como rectilínea (Figura 1b). En los murales de Mitla (Figura 1c) también tenemos un yucu pintado de igual modo.

No obstante, resulta obvio que cualquier estudio que se lleve a cabo sobre la escritura mixteca debe realizarse a través de sus códices. La relación de documentos mixtecos que contienen el signo yucu es la siguiente: los códices Baranda, Becker II, Bodley, Colombino-Becker I, Egerton, Dehesa, Fernández-Leal, Fragmento Gómez de Orozco, Mixteco-Postcortesiano nº 36, Muro, Nuttall, Porfirio Díaz, Selden, Sierra, Tulane, Vindobonensis y Yanhuitlan, los lienzos de Antonio de León o Tlapiltepec, Coixtlahuaca 1 y 2, Córdova-Castellanos, Filadelfia, Ihuitlan, Jicayán, Meixueiro, Ocotepec, Santa María Nativitas, Tecciztlan y Tequatepec, Tequixtepec 1 y 2, Tulancingo, Yolotepec y Zacatepec 1, la Genealogía de Tlazultepec, el Rollo de Selden y los mapas de San Juan Solola y Xochitepec junto con los mapas de las Relaciones Geográficas de Amoltepeque, Teozacoalco y Texupa. El Manuscrito Aubin nº 20 será objeto de un análisis especial.

Figura 2. Cerros con doble voluta de la escritura mixteca en el recto del Códice Vindobonensis. a) Combinación voluta curva con recta (pág. 3). b) sin volutas (pág. 34).

Como paso previo hemos de señalar, en primer lugar, que en ningún caso intentaremos diferenciar el posible número de escribas que pudo participar en cada uno de los códices, sobre todo en los de gran extensión. En segundo lugar, también debemos tener presente que hay documentos que contienen más de 100 glifos *yucu* (Nuttall, Bodley, etc) mientras que otros sólo presentan 1 (Genealogía de Tlazultepec).

Comenzamos nuestro análisis por los documentos cuyo origen se considera prehispánico. En el recto del Códice Vindobonensis o Códice Yuta Tnoho (Jansen y Pérez 2000: 3) están pintados aproximadamente unos 160 signos *yucu*. Todos ellos presentan la doble voluta (Figura 2a) salvo unos 5 que, debido al añadido de otros elementos glíficos, no tienen ninguna (Figura 2b). Además, combina las volutas curvilíneas con la rectilíneas, apareciendo generalmente las segundas cuando el cerro no tiene su color normal (véase figura 2a). Por otro lado, los signos indicativos de *yuu*-'piedra' también están realizados con la doble voluta, tanto cuando definen a este elemento como a otros, por ejemplo los 'hombres piedra' de la página 37. Además, también incluye árboles que contienen este elemento (por ejemplo en las páginas 17 y 37) que sospechamos puede indicar que eran árboles realizados con este material, si bien también puede estar actuando de complemento fonético yu para indicarnos que el nombre del árbol comienza por esa sílaba. El verso del Códice Vindobonensis o Códice Yuta Tnoo (Jansen y Pérez 2000: 3), más tardío, tiene pocos signos cerro, unos 10, aunque destaca el recogido en la página III por presentar la doble y la triple voluta en el mismo signo (Figura 3a). El 'hombre piedra' está realizado con doble voluta (Figura 3b).

Los códices Colombino-Becker I o Iya Nacuaa (Jansen y Pérez 2000: 4) y Selden 3135, también llamado Sicuañe o Añute (Jansen y Pérez 2000: 1 y 5), presentan en todos
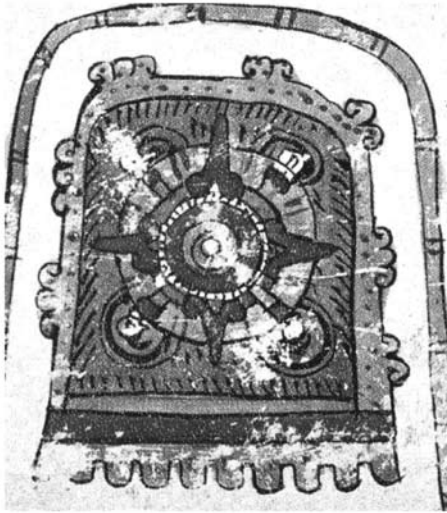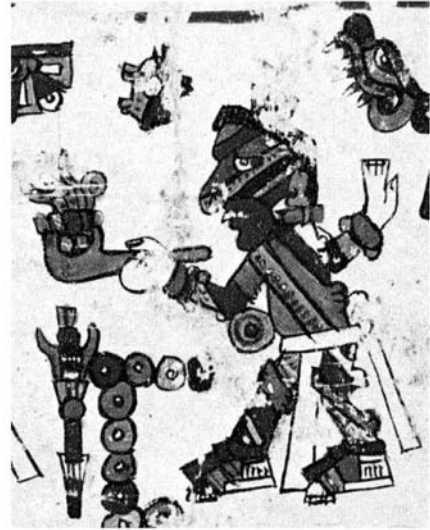
Figura 3. a) Cerro con doble y triple voluta en el verso del Códice Vindobonensis (pág. III). b) "Hombre piedra en el verso del Códice Vindobonensis (pág. VI).

los casos la doble voluta, casi siempre rectilínea, con lo cual se adaptan totalmente a la tradición escrituraria mixteca.

Llegados a este punto deseamos expresar nuestra opinión respecto a la consideración del Códice Añute como prehispánico. Aunque este no es el lugar adecuado para tratar de la discusión del porqué un documento debe ser considerado prehispánico o colonial, sí lo vamos a hacer, puesto que ejemplifica muy bien la distinción entre ambos términos.

Este documento mixteco está realizado sobre piel curtida y plegado en forma de biombo con un total de veinte hojas, y aunque inicialmente estaba pintado por ambas caras, una de ellas fue cubierta posteriormente con pintura blanca. Por ello, codicológicamente hablando se trataría de una obra precolombina, pues el formato, material y disposición de la información así lo indican.

No obstante, su clasificación como post-conquista está basada en el estudio que Alfonso Caso realizó del códice en 1964, ya que este investigador interpretó los glifos cronológicos de modo que situaba la información que el documento recoge entre los años 783-794 d.C. a 1556-1560. Ahora bien, en opinión de Maarten Jansen y Gabina Aurora Pérez (2000: 25) este documento 'no fue hecho para presentar ante una corte española, sino para un "asunto interno (...)"'.

Por ello, en nuestra opinión el Códice Añute (Selden) es un claro ejemplo de realización preconquista, pese a que los hechos narrados abarquen hasta los años 1556-1560,
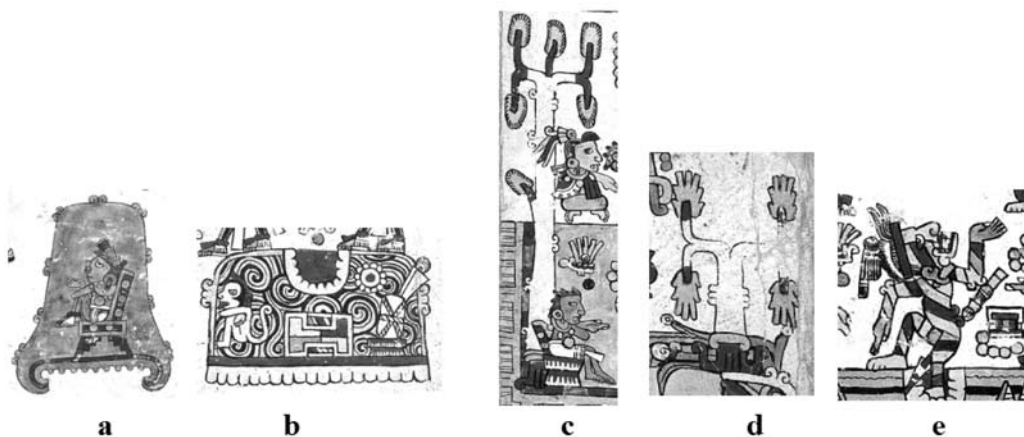
Figura 4. Signo yuu-"piedra" en el Códice Sicuañe o Nuttall. a) Cerro con doble y triple voluta (página 50). b) Cerro con triple voluta (página 1). c) Árbol con doble voluta (página 16). d) Árbol con triple voluta (página 37). e) "Hombre piedra" (página 23).

fechas ya coloniales, pues no se ha tenido en cuenta una cuestión importante: aunque la cultura occidental se implantó en el Valle de México a partir de 1521, esto no quiere decir que su irradiación a otras áreas culturales fuera inmediata, e incluso en esta fecha lo único que ocurre es que es tomada la ciudad de Tenochtitlan, pero ni tan siquiera sus habitantes indígenas modificaron su cultura en ese instante. La aculturación no es inmediata, necesita mucho tiempo para implantarse y realmente nunca se consigue de manera definitiva. Además, el resto de regiones mexicanas no fueron conquistadas hasta muchos años después, con lo cual el proceso se retrasó aún más. En concreto, en la zona mixteca, lugar del que proviene el códice, no se fundó la primera ciudad española (Antequera) hasta 1560. Debido a ello la posible influencia europea en la escritura y realización de los códices mixtecas debió ser más tardía, con lo cual si aceptamos la fecha de su finalización, el documento aún se enmarca dentro de la época prehispánica mixteca. La prueba de ello podemos encontrarla en que este códice, pese a llegar supuestamente al año 1560 y tener un contenido histórico-genealógico, no recoge en sus informaciones ningún dato referente a la llegada de los españoles ni a los posibles matrimonios que estos realizaron con la nobleza indígena, tal y como ocurre con otros códices postcoloniales mixtecas (véase también Jansen y Pérez 2000: 25-26).

Retomando el objeto de nuestro estudio nos resta tratar de dos 'grandes' documentos prehispánicos: los códices Nuttall o Tonindeye (Jansen y Pérez 2000: 3 y 4) y el Bodley 2858 también llamado Qhcuaa o Ñuu Tnoo – Ndisi Nuu (Jansen y Pérez 2000: 4).

El primero de ellos contiene la representación de unos 150 cerros de los cuales 4 combinan la doble voluta con la triple (Figura 4a) y 2 únicamente presentan la triple (Figura 4b). Obviamente el resto están realizados con doble voluta, tanto curvilínea como
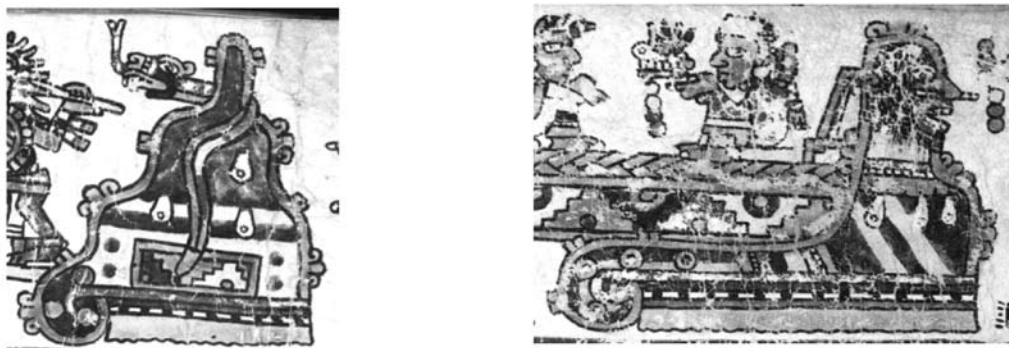
Figura 5. Cerros con doble y triple voluta del Códice Bodley 2858 o Qhcuaa (páginas 25 y 27).

rectilínea. Además, contiene árboles con doble voluta (Figura 4c) y con triple (Figura 4d) y 'hombres piedra' con la doble voluta (Figura 4e).

El segundo, Códice Bodley 2858 o Ñuu Tnoo – Ndisi Nuu, presenta unos 75 cerros, todos ellos con doble voluta rectilínea salvo 2 que combinan doble y triple (Figura 5). Además, todos los elementos pétreos (piedras, árboles, etc) presentan la doble voluta rectilínea. Sorprende que sea precisamente en los 2 cerros que tienen alguna triple que esta sea curvilínea (véase figura 5), tratándose de los únicos casos en todo el documento.

Tras el análisis de los documentos mixtecos cuyo origen prehispánico queda fuera de toda duda, salvo el Códice Selden 3135 o Añute, podemos deducir que la doble voluta indicativa de *yuu-*'piedra' figurada sobre todo en el signo *yucu-*'cerro' es una característica de la escritura mixteca precolonial.

En los códices coloniales veremos que la doble voluta continúa siendo definitoria de los libros mixtecos pero comienza a extenderse el uso de la triple, resultando ser exclusiva de alguno de ellos. Por otro lado, también aparecen los cerros sin ningún tipo de voluta o con una. Parece que la utilización de la triple voluta y su ausencia es una característica de los códices más aculturados, tanto como mexicanizados como occidentalizados.

Los documentos pintados o copiados tras la llegada de la Administración colonial que mantienen en su totalidad la doble voluta son los siguientes: los códices Baranda, Becker II, Mixteco-Postcortesiano nº 36 y Muro, los lienzos de Coixtlahuaca 2, Córdova-Castellanos, Filadelfia, Ihuitlan, Jicayán, Meixueiro, Ocotepec, Tequixtepec 1 y Zacatepec 1, y el mapa de San Juan Solola junto con los mapas de las Relaciones Geográficas de Amoltepeque, Teozacoalco y Texupa.

Uno de los aspectos más llamativos de estos documentos lo encontramos en el Códice Baranda ya que pese a su enorme aculturamiento mantiene la doble voluta en los cerros, aunque en un lugar inapropiado. De este modo, el escriba del mismo hace el elemento
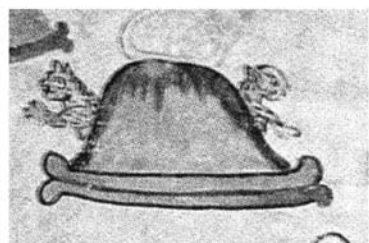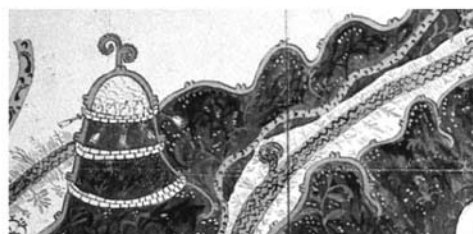
Figura 6. a) Cerro con doble voluta del Códice Baranda. b) Cordilleras montañosas del mapa de la Relación Geográfica de Texupa con doble voluta.

con las dos franjas de colores de la base del signo *yucu* (Figura 6a). Por otro lado el Lienzo de Ihuitlan parece presentar algún cerro sin voluta pero la mayor parte tienen la doble. Así mismo, debemos de resaltar la 'pureza' del estilo prehispánico en los tres mapas de las Relaciones Geográficas de esta zona mencionadas, pues el resto son totalmente occidentales (véase Acuña 1984). El Mapa de Texupa, pese a estar más aculturado, tiene en la línea de las cordilleras representadas la doble voluta (Figura 6b).

La doble y triple voluta aparece pintada en los siguientes documentos: : los códices Egerton, Fernández-Leal y los lienzos de Antonio León o Tlapiltepec, Coixtlahuaca 1 y Córdova-Castellanos, junto con el Rollo de Selden. Destacar que el Códice Egerton 2895 o Sánchez Solís o Ñuu Ñaña (Jansen y Pérez 2000: 5) únicamente presenta la triple voluta en el gran cerro de la página 2. Por su parte, el Lienzo Antonio de León también tiene algún cerro sin voluta.

Con la triple voluta encontramos el Códice Tulane o Rollo de Huamelulpan (Jansen y Pérez 2000: 3) y los lienzos de Tequixtepec 2, Tulancingo y Yolotepec. Sorprende este último debido a que su grado de aculturamiento es menor, aunque también presenta algunos signos cerro sin volutas, creemos que debido a los elementos glíficos que los acompañan.

Sin ningún tipo de voluta en el glifo yucu tenemos los códices Dehesa y Yanhuitlan, la Genealogía de Tlazultepec y el Mapa de Xochitepec. Con una o dos volutas se encuentra el códice Sierra.

Hay otros documentos que destacan por su heterogeneidad en la representación de los cerros. Así, el Códice Porfirio Díaz presenta la doble voluta en su sección calendárico-religiosa, pero en la parte histórica muchas montañas no tienen voluta, una de ellas sólo presenta 1 voluta y hay varias con 2. Incluso a través de su edición fotográfica (Van Doesburg 2001) podemos apreciar que en uno de los cerros se añadieron con posterioridad unas triples volutas (Figura 7a). El otro códice cuicateco, el Fernández Leal, tiene los cerros con ninguna voluta, dos y hasta uno con tres (Figura 7b). Por su parte, el Lienzo Tecciztlan y Tequatepec tiene cerros sin voluta, con 1 y con 2; el Lienzo de Santa María Nativitas presenta el yucu sin voluta y con ella doble, e incluso la gran piedra del
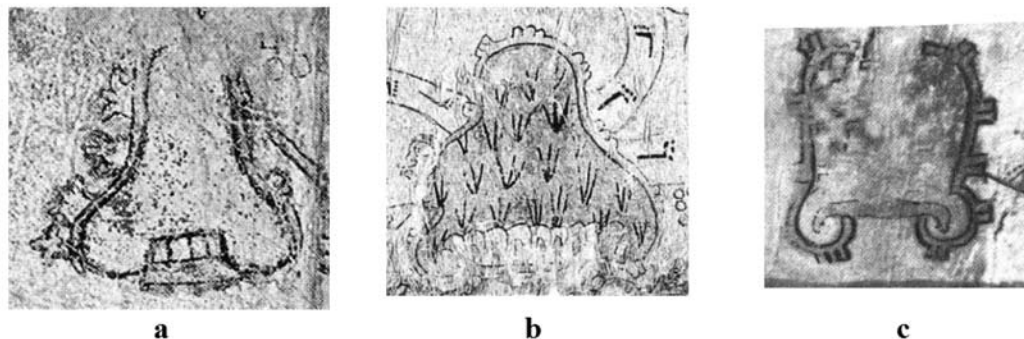
Figura 7. a) Cerro con triple voluta añadida en el lateral izquierdo del Códice Porfirio Díaz (Doesburg 2001 II: 46). b) Cerro con triple voluta del Códice Fernández Leal (Doesburg 2001 II: 56). c) Cerro con doble y triple voluta del Fragmento Gómez de Orozco.

glifo central tiene la triple voluta. Por último, para poder comprender la complejidad de este análisis basta ver el Fragmento Gómez de Orozco que sólo tiene 2 cerros, uno con doble y triple voluta (Figura 7c) y el otro, 'cerro torcido', sin ninguna.

Tras el análisis presentado respecto del glifo *yucu-*'cerro' en la escritura mixteca pensamos que se puede inferir que en época prehispánica se caracteriza por presentar en su contorno la doble voluta, pero que paulatinamente se va introduciendo un desarreglo en esta representación, tanto por influencia del Centro de México como por aculturamiento occidental, apareciendo la triple voluta y la ausencia de la misma. Aquellos documentos que presentan una sola voluta creemos que no son determinantes.

La única conclusión que podemos afirmar es que la doble voluta es exclusiva de la escritura mixteca. En el área maya los ejemplos son muy escasos y aparece en algunos árboles. Por ello si un documento del Centro de México, como la Matrícula de Tributos, presenta una parte de sus glifos *tepetl-*'cerro' con doble voluta, creemos que es debido a que su escriba había sido educado en un ámbito mixteco.

La Matrícula de Tributos

La Matrícula de Tributos es un documento de origen prehispánico pintado posiblemente durante la última década del gobierno de Motecuhzoma II, aunque alguna de sus páginas puede ser anterior. En su realización participaron al menos 6 *tlacuiloque* (Batalla 2002 y en prensa) plasmándose en el mismo los tributos que los lugares conquistados pagaban al Imperio Mexica. Su contenido fue copiado, hacia 1542, en lo que conocemos como segunda parte o sección tributaria del Códice Mendoza, obra realizada por un único artista, que ya había participado en la realización de diversas páginas de la Matrícula (6r a 11v) para enviar al Emperador español (véase Batalla, en prensa).

Consideramos que la Matrícula de Tributos es un documento prehispánico, tanto por

su formato original como por el estilo artístico de los diversos tlacuiloque que participaron en su confección. Por ello, en su origen podría haber sido tanto una larga tira enrollada o plegada en biombo como estar compuesta por hojas sueltas, pues sus 'páginas' están pintadas por una sola cara y, posteriormente, fueron unidas por el lado sin pinturas para conformar un libro en formato europeo, de ahí que las roturas y deterioros de los supuestos folios no coincidan en su recto y verso (Batalla 1992 I: 48-49 y Mohar 1997: 72-80), tal y como se puede observar, por ejemplo, en los que se corresponden con el 2, 3, 6, 7, 9, etc (Matrícula 1980).

Pese a que por razones de manufactura de las hojas individuales de amate, L.M. Mohar (1997: 74) considere que en su origen la Matrícula no estaba compuesta por hojas sueltas, nosotros somos partidarios de la hipótesis apuntada por F. Berdan (1980a: 9) de que era así. De este modo, las hojas sueltas, convierten a la Matrícula en un documento de su época, nómina de tributos prehispánica, que podía ser corregido conforme se modificaban los tributos de las 'provincias', dependiendo del status de adhesión al Imperio y sus posibles modificaciones (véase Michael Smith 2003: 147-171). Así, se podían tanto añadir, quitar o cambiar los productos que entregaban las localidades ya sujetas, corrigiendo o cambiando la hoja correspondiente, como introducir los de las conquistas recientes mediante la realización de otra nueva.

Por ello, respecto a su fecha de realización, podríamos dar como válida la ofrecida en 1943 por R.H. Barlow (1990: 142) que sitúa la obra como pintada a partir de 1511, dentro de la última década del reinado de Motecuhzoma, pues el documento se ha datado como muy tardío por la incorporación de provincias conquistadas poco antes de la llegada de los españoles (Rojas 1997: 33). Sin embargo, también hemos de tener presente que si se trataba de una nómina de tributos que se presentaba en hojas sueltas, su vigencia y confección podía ser el resultado de una serie de años continuados. De esta manera, aunque F. Berdan (1992 I: 64-65) ya apunta la posibilidad de que la Matrícula pudo ser pintada entre 1511 y 1519, y no en un año concreto, podemos retrasar más en el tiempo el inicio de su composición, pues pudo comenzar a realizarse cuando se empezó a conformar el Imperio, de manera que cada una de las hojas o grupos de ellas puede tener un año concreto de realización distinto y abarcar el conjunto un periodo temporal más amplio. Una posible prueba de esta hipótesis es el elevado número de tlacuiloque que participaron en las páginas que hoy en día conservamos, un mínimo de 6, y que uno de ellos, de tradición estilística mixteca o propiamente mixteco, se encuentre trabajando para el Imperio Mexica. Por ello, somos contrarios a la opinión de Luis Reyes (1997: 17 y 49) que sitúa la obra como realizada diez o veinte después de la toma de Tenochtitlan por Cortés y la define como un resumen incompleto copiado de otros documentos antiguos.

El contenido de la Matrícula de Tributos tampoco puede ser objeto de discusión en este lugar, aunque mantenemos la opinión de Pedro Carrasco (1996: 110-111) referida a que el documento muestra la relación de 'provincias' tributarias a Tenochtitlan, es decir, al Imperio Mexica.

Respecto a su descripción física destaca por su gran formato 42 x 29 cm, su soporte conformado originalmente por papel indígena y que en la actualidad consta de 32 hojas pintadas por una sola cara, aunque por la segunda parte del Códice Mendoza (1992 III: folios 17v a 55r) podemos deducir que al menos hacia 1542 tenía 5 páginas más, que se situaban entre los actuales folios 4v y 5r (provincias de Axocopan –nº 7- y Atotonilco de Pedraza –nº 8-), 12v y 13r (Tlachquiauhco –nº 28- y Tochtepec –nº 29-) y tras el último folio, donde falta Oxitipan (nº 38). Pensamos que este hecho incide en que su formato a mediados del siglo XVI, cuando se utiliza como original de la segunda parte del Códice Mendoza, ya era europeo, pues faltan dos páginas intermedias completas, con recto y verso artificiales, y una final que necesariamente sólo tenía recto, luego en este momento la Matrícula de Tributos finalizaba o comenzaba por Oxitipan, dependiendo del sentido de lectura que apliquemos (Rojas 1997:34).

En cuanto al número de tlacuiloque que participaron en la Matrícula de tributos definimos un total de 6 (Batalla 2002 y en prensa) a través del análisis de distintos elementos escriturarios e iconográficos.

Para el tema que nos ocupa hemos de señalar que uno de los elementos diferenciadores de uno de los tlacuiloque respecto de los otros 5 es su manera de realizar los glifos correspondientes al logograma TEPE. Es el único escriba de la Matrícula de Tributos y por extensión de todos los documentos que conservamos del Centro de México, que utiliza la doble voluta. Por ello, lo denominados como un *tlacuilo* educado en la tradición escrituraria mixteca. Así, podemos afirmar que los folios 4r a 5v y 12r a 13v de este documento fueron realizados por un *tlacuilo* de tradición estilística mixteca o puramente mixteco (Figura 8). La propia Matrícula de Tributos presenta las tres 'volutas' en la representación de la montaña en el resto de páginas que contienen topónimos (Figura 9), con lo cual podemos diferenciar con claridad al pintor de estilo mixteco del resto de participantes.

Dado que encontramos dos bloques de páginas con cerros de doble voluta (4r a 5v y 12r a 13v), podríamos pensar que estamos ante dos pintores diferentes educados en la tradición de escritura mixteca, pero hay suficientes rasgos iconográficos repartidos por estos folios (véase figura 8) que permiten afirmar que todas las imágenes contenidas en ellos fueron pintadas por la misma mano (Batalla 2002 y en prensa).

Retomando la figura 9 vemos que el glifo *tepetl* separa al *tlacuilo* de estilo mixteco del resto. Las cargas de ropa establecen las divergencias entre cinco de los artistas, el diseño de los granos de frijol y maíz de cuatro, el *maxtlatl* de los trajes y los escudos de los seis, las cabezas de *Xolotl* de cinco, las de *ocelotl* de cuatro y, finalmente, el glifo del *xiquipilli* de cuatro. Existen otros muchos rasgos de unión de su trabajo y separación de los otros, pero consideramos que los recogidos bastan para determinar la presencia de estos 6 *tlacuiloque* en las páginas que conservamos de la Matrícula de Tributos.

No obstante, salvo la doble voluta del signo *tepetl* no hemos encontrado ningún otro elemento escriturario e iconográfico en el trabajo de este *tlacuilo* que podamos considerar exclusivo de la escritura mixteca.
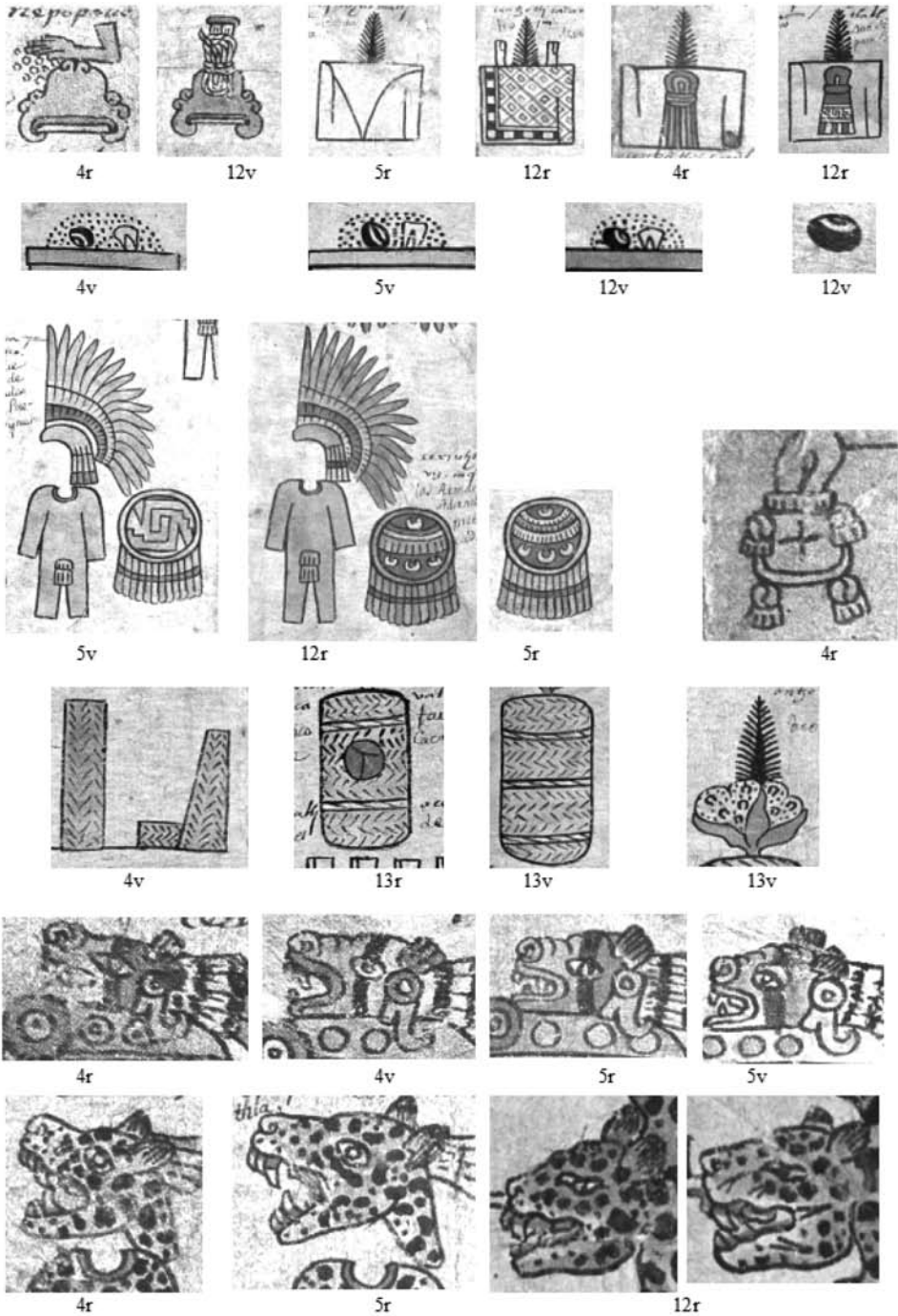
Figura 8. Detalles estilísticos del tlacuilo de "tradición mixteca" de la Matricula de Tributos (1980: folios 4r a 5v y 12r a 13v).

Un Glifo de la Tradición Escrituraria Mixteca: el signo 'cerro'con doble voluta
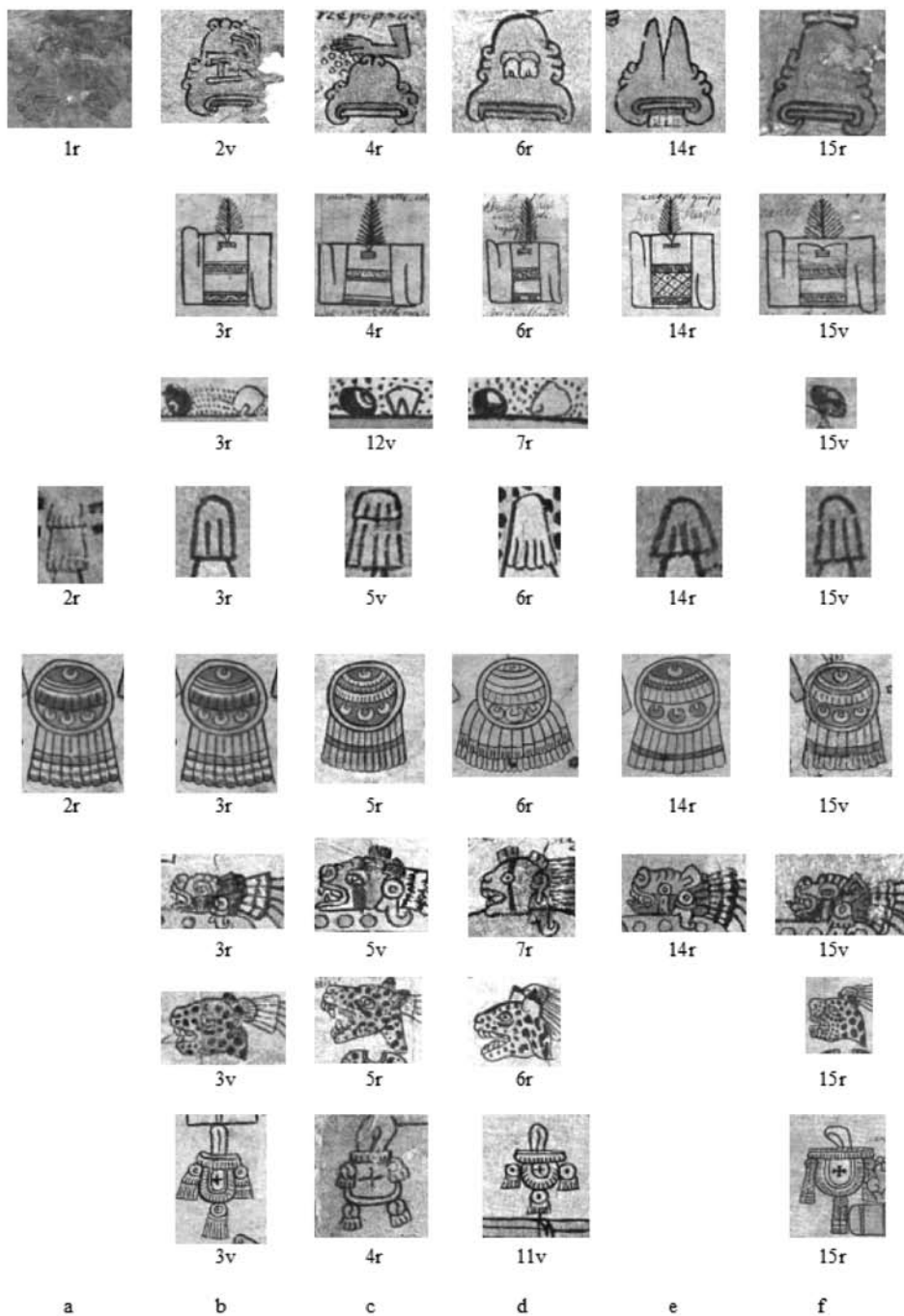
Figure 9. Detalles estilísticos de los tlacuiloque de la Matrícula de Tributos (1980): a) tlacuilo de los folios 1r a 2r. b) tlacuilo de los folios 2v a 3v. c) tlacuilo de los 4r a 5v y 12r a 13v –"tradición mixteca"-. d) tlacuilo de los folios 6r a 11v. e) tlacuilo del folio 14r. f) tlacuilo de los folios 14v a 16r.
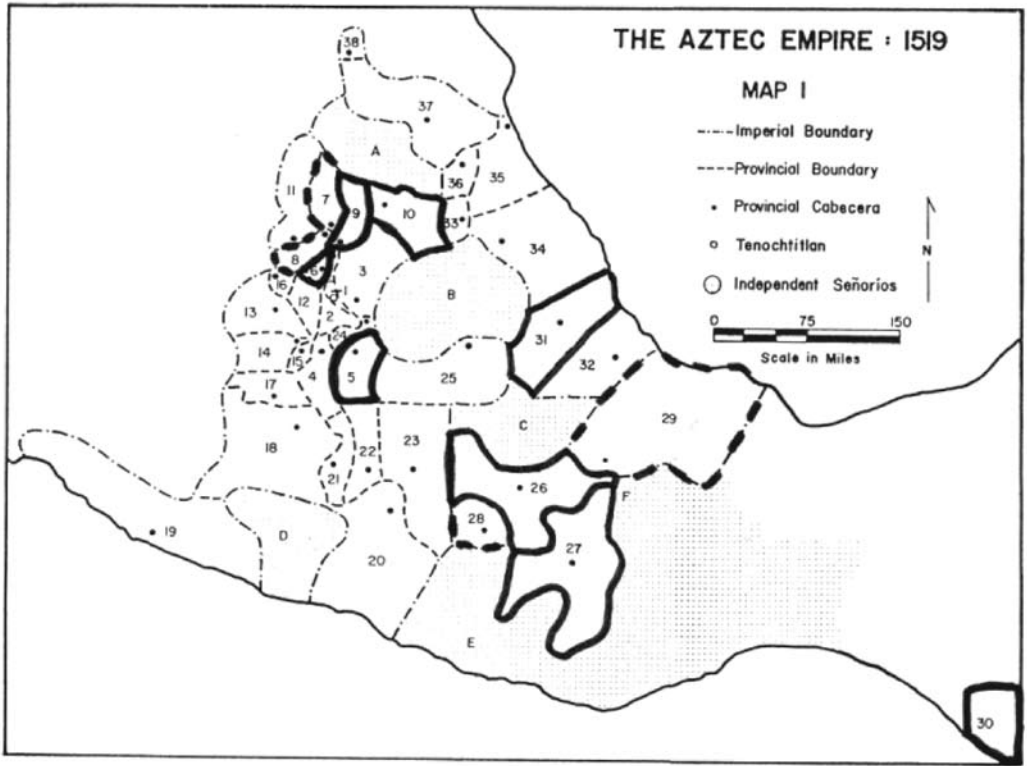
Figura 10. Distribución geográfica de las "provincias" pintadas por el tlacuilo de "tradición mixteca" de la Matrícula de Tributos (folios 4r a 5v y 12r a 13v) –las cuato provincias desaparecidas estas marcadas por líneas discontínuas (números 6 – 7 -28 -29)-. (Mapa tomado de Berdan 1980b: 28).

Una vez diferenciados los *tlacuiloque* de la Matrícula de Tributos, analizamos la situación geográfica de las 'provincias' de las que cada uno se ocupó (véase Batalla, en prensa), resultando que el '*tlacuilo* mixteco' recogió provincias que se encuentran separadas en dos bloques que coinciden con los dos grupos de folios donde trabaja, coincidiendo una de ellas con el área mixteca y el Xoconochco (Figura 10). Respecto a las 'provincias' 7, 8, 28 y 29, desaparecidas en la Matrícula pero localizadas según el Códice Mendoza en el medio del trabajo de este artista, pudieron ser realizadas por él, pues se encuentran anexas a las que pintó, pero también pudieron ser pintadas por cualquier otro.

El Manuscrito Aubin Nº 20

No creemos necesario presentar el documento formalmente pues es sobradamente conocido entre los especialistas en códices en general y en cultura mixteca en particular (véase Simonin 1998 y Jansen 1998). Se trata de una piel de venado con unas medidas

de 91 x 51 cm, que presenta las cinco direcciones del Universo asociadas con topónimos y parejas de deidades. La parte central del documento está muy deteriorada y realmente sólo se aprecian escasos restos del contenido de sus pinturas.

Ahora bien, nuestra opinión respecto de este documento es que no se trata de un original prehispánico. Somos conscientes que los aspectos relativos al mismo que vamos a referir a continuación precisan de un mayor análisis, que ya estamos preparando. Por otro lado, en ningún caso queremos dar a entender que se trata de una falsificación con un contenido inventado. Basta leer el estudio realizado por Maarten Jansen (1998) sobre el mismo para comprender la imposibilidad de poder 'inventarse' lo que describe, pues la información parece verídica. Por ello, más bien creemos que bien puede tratarse de una copia muy tardía, mediados del siglo XVIII, de un documento prehispánico, o bien ser un original pintado en tiempos coloniales por una persona que aún conocía el sistema de representación y las creencias mixtecas.

Los primeros problemas que plantea el Manuscrito Aubin nº 20 están referidos a su primer poseedor conocido, el caballero italiano Lorenzo Boturini Benaduci (1702-1755) y a la extensa colección de documentos que reunió en México (véase Glass 1975). En nuestra opinión, caben muchas posibilidades de que la colección de Boturini esté compuesta en su mayor parte de copias tomadas por originales y de varias falsificaciones. Situémonos en el México del siglo XVIII donde un caballero extranjero recorre su geografía adquiriendo documentos que le comportarán enormes gastos económicos: 'caminé largas tierras, y muchas veces sin encontrar albergue, hasta que con ocho años de incesante tesón y de crecidísimos gastos, tuve la dicha que ninguno puede contar, de haber conseguido un museo de cosas tan preciosas' (Boturini 1986: 5). El propio Boturini declarará ante el Alcalde del Crimen que para conseguir la colección pasó muchas penalidades, destacando entre ellas que era 'muy difícil el tratar con los indios, que son en extremo desconfiados de todo español y esconden sus antiguas pinturas hasta enterrarlas (Torre Revello 1936, en León-Portilla 1986: XVII). Ahora bien, si esto es cierto, cómo consiguió que le entregaran tantos códices si los indígenas los guardaban celosamente en sus comunidades, tanto por cuestiones religiosas como económicas, pues nos consta que eran documentos legales ante la Administración colonial. Por ello, suponemos que Boturini tuvo que invertir gran cantidad de dinero para la adquisición de estas obras. Y si hablamos de dinero también debemos tratar de la picardía de aquel que posee algo que otra persona desea. Tenemos pruebas de que los indígenas falsifican todo tipo de objetos y documentos desde los inicios de los tiempos coloniales. Dentro de nuestro ámbito de estudio destaca el grupo de códices denominados Techialoyan por tratarse de falsificaciones con contenido verídico de finales del siglo XVII y principios del XVIII (véase Batalla y Rojas 1993). Resumiendo, ¿qué impedía a los indígenas pintar documentos semejantes a los antiguos, con el mismo soporte físico y estilo escriturario e iconográfico, para vendérselos a Boturini como originales? Creemos que nada, pues estaban acostumbrados a ello. Es la ley de la oferta y la demanda, y si algo han demostrado los indígenas, de México en este caso concreto, es que no eran ni son idiotas. Había un beneficio económico y pensamos que esta era una manera de obtenerlo.

Esta disquisición un tanto 'filosófica' pensamos que debe tenerse en cuenta en lo relativo a muchas piezas, de todo tipo, que poseemos de las culturas mesoamericanas. ¿Quién nos iba a decir que las calaveras aztecas realizadas en cristal de roca son falsificaciones? Mucho más doloroso es conocer el nombre del investigador francés que encargó una de ellas, pues es uno de los grandes precursores del estudio de los códices mesoamericanos.

Nuestra opinión es que sólo por pertenecer a la colección Boturini, el Manuscrito Aubin nº 20 ya merece un análisis especial.

Otro elemento interesante de este documento es su soporte, piel de venado, pues se corresponde totalmente con la cultura mixteca y sus códices. Que se trata de una piel se puede comprobar a simple vista, pero ¿se ha analizado realmente la piel para determinar que es de venado? O simplemente se afirma así debido a que los indígenas en época prehispánica curtían las pieles de este animal por no tener ganado vacuno o porcino. Debemos de tener presente que ya a finales del siglo XIX Eugène Boban (1891 I: 331) nos indica que la piel es de cerf-'ciervo o venado'. ¿Cómo lo supo él? ¿Realmente llevó a cabo un análisis científico del soporte?, ¿Se ha analizado la piel con medios técnicos actuales desde entonces?

La cuestión es clara: hay un códice que se considera prehispánico y su soporte es de piel. La conclusión con los datos históricos que tenemos del área y época de estudio es que tiene que ser de venado. Por ello, mantenemos que otra de las grandes asignaturas pendientes que tenemos sobre los códices mesoamericanos es su análisis codicológico. En demasiadas ocasiones se dan por ciertas informaciones que nunca han sido comprobadas científicamente y dudamos mucho de que en la época de Boban se llevaran a cabo, recordemos las preciosas calaveras de cristal de roca.

En el caso de que el análisis se lleve a cabo en algún momento y resulte ser piel de venado no modificaría nuestra opinión sobre el origen del Manuscrito Aubin nº 20, pues en el siglo XVIII había venados para obtener su piel. Recordemos que los códices del Grupo Techialoyan están realizados con papel de amate pese a encontrarnos a finales del siglo XVII y principios del XVIII. Otra posible solución para determinar el momento de confección del documento sería el carbono 14. Es una prueba realmente económica y para una obra que podría tener, en caso de ser realmente prehispánica, no más de 700 años, el margen de error de este método sería de aproximadamente +/- 25 años. Debido a ello, pensamos que esto sería definitivo para determinar cuándo fue realizado el Manuscrito Aubin nº 20.

Por último, hay otra cuestión que sorprende del documento: sus copias. Las conocemos a través de su primera reproducción por León y Gama en la segunda mitad del siglo XVIII. En todas ellas encontramos claramente reproducida la parte central del códice. Ahora bien, de la descripción que el propio Boturini hizo de su estado físico se deduce que cuando lo adquirió el punto cardinal central ya estaba borrado. Por ello, Maarten Jansen (1998: 154, nota 2) nos dice que: 'es curioso que Boturini no mencione 'ídolos' en la parte central, sino sólo en las cuatro esquinas: si en su época ya no se veía bien
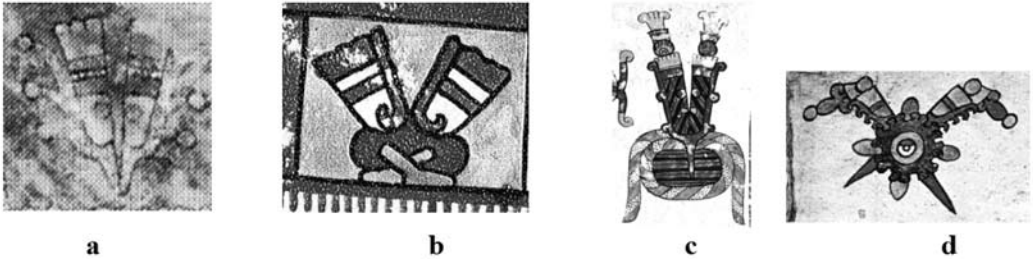
Figura 11. Representación de espinas de autosacrificio. a) Manuscrito Aubin nº 20. b) Códice Vindobonensis recto, página 6. c) Códice Borgia, página 64. d) Códice Borbónico, trecena 4.

la escena en el centro del original, no se explica a base de cuáles datos se pintaron las copias'. Estamos totalmente de acuerdo con esta cuestión. ¿Cómo pudo León y Gama plasmar las deidades y el topónimo central en la copia que realizó si en el original ya no se veía nada? ¿Se inventó este punto cardinal a partir de otras fuentes? ¿Qué más partes tuvo que 'reconstruir'? No se sabe nada al respecto pero hay que reconocer que resulta muy extraño. Salvo que mantengamos que realmente en época de Boturini sí se conservaba esta parte del documento, ya que él no señala expresamente que estuviera borrada: 'tengo una piel curada, con un círculo en el medio de cuentas coloradas, que forman los números de cuatro triadecatéridas, acompañadas de una cabeza de conejo, y se ven en los cuatro ángulos de este mapa diferentes figuras de ídolos muy feos, que eran como guardas y custodios del ciclo' (Boturini 1986: 139). En cualquier caso sorprende que la deidad de la izquierda del punto cardinal central sea muy semejante a la que esta representada en la página 21 del Códice Nuttall.

Respecto a sus rasgos iconográficos y escriturarios también encontramos elementos muy 'extraños'. Como ya hemos indicado, estamos pendientes de presentar un análisis más amplio sobre el Manuscrito Aubin nº 20, por ello en esta ocasión vamos a referirnos a tres aspectos muy concretos del mismo, que nos hacen dudar de su originalidad prehispánica.

En primer lugar, debemos ocuparnos de la representación de los cerros. Aparecen reproducidos en 3 ocasiones en el documento (direcciones norte, sur y oeste) y en todas ellas presentan la triple voluta. Este rasgo no coincide con lo que hemos visto en los códices mixtecos prehispánicos. Ni tan siquiera es comparable a los documentos que conforman el denominado Grupo Borgia. El glifo del cerro con triple voluta nos remite al *tepetl* de Centro de México o a tiempos coloniales, y el documento es supuestamente mixteco prehispánico.

En segundo lugar, también encontramos divergencias en la representación de la dirección correspondiente al norte. Dentro de la cueva o boca del Monstruo de la Tierra vemos dos espinas de autosacrificio (Figura 11a). Su iconografía es apropiada, pues incluye la sangre en el lateral de ambas. Ahora bien, esta figuración de la sangre con regueros que finalizan en piedras preciosas de color verde no es ni mixteca (Figura 11b)
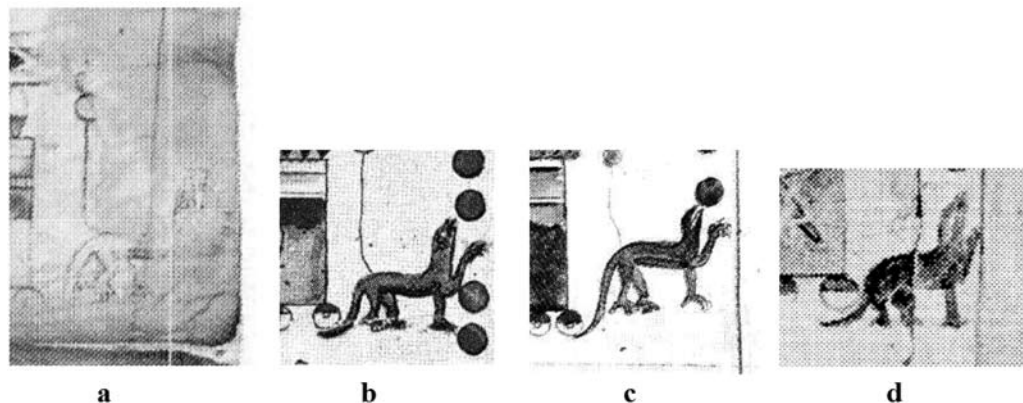
Figura 12. Glifo del día lagartija en el Manuscrito Aubin. a) original. b) copia de León y Gama. c) copia de Pichardo. d) copia del Museo Nacional de Antropología.

ni del Grupo Borgia (Figura 11c). Se corresponde con el Centro de México. Pero los documentos de la última área mencionada tampoco añaden el chalchihuitl a los regueros de la sangre de las espinas de autosacrificio (Figura 11d).

El resto de iconos del Manuscrito Aubin nº 20 que tienen representada la sangre sí pertenecen al estilo mixteco. Como ya demostramos en otros lugares (Batalla 1992 y 1994), el modo de representación de la sangre resulta de primera importancia para determinar la procedencia de un documento y a qué época pertenece. Por ello, la iconografía de esta figura representativa de las espinas de autosacrificio es muy extraña dentro del estilo mixteco.

En tercer lugar, llama poderosamente la atención el estilo del glifo del día lagartija (Figura 12a). Aunque en el original se encuentra deteriorado, sí permite comprobar que las copias de León y Gama (Figura 12b), Pichardo (Figura 12c) y la conservada en el Museo Nacional de Antropología de México (Figura 12d) la reproducen tal y como estaba pintada. Este glifo lagartija no es normal y no se corresponde con ninguna escritura mesoamericana. Parece más bien una invención. Sorprende esta desviación debido a que el resto de nombres calendáricos parecen coincidir con otras figuraciones típicas de los códices. Así, el glifo del día lluvia de la dirección norte es exactamente idéntico al que encontramos, por ejemplo, en la página 47 del Códice Bodley o en la 56 del Códice Nuttall.

Como vemos hay diversas cuestiones relativas al Manuscrito Aubin nº 20 que nos hacen pensar en que podría tratarse de una copia tardía de un documento prehispánico o de un original pintado en tiempos coloniales tardíos. Debido a su contenido, magistralmente interpretado por Maarten Jansen (1998: 125-161), no nos atrevemos a definirla como una simple falsificación, ya que entonces la persona que llevó a cabo la obra debería tener unos amplios conocimientos de escritura, iconografía y creencias religiosas. De

ser así, pensamos que podríamos afirmar que el Manuscrito Aubin nº 20 no es una copia ni una falsificación. Se trataría de un original de mediados del siglo XVIII realizado expresamente para venderlo a Lorenzo Boturini como un original más antiguo, de ahí los deterioros con los que se confeccionó para dar apariencia de época prehispánica.

Conclusiones

A través de este trabajo hemos pretendido mostrar la importancia del análisis de un elemento particular de la escritura mixteca: el yucu o cerro. Su representación en esta área cultural mediante una doble voluta es útil para determinar el origen prehispánico y colonial de los códices mixtecos y su grado de 'mexicanización' o de aculturación occidental. Hemos comprobado que los grandes códices mixtecos prehispánicos mantienen la doble voluta, salvo excepciones muy escasas donde presentan la triple, generalmente en cerros de mayor tamaño que el resto. En los documentos coloniales hay muchas variaciones, pues los cerros se pintan con ninguna, una, dos y tres volutas.

Lo importante que debe ser destacado es que la doble voluta en el yucu es un elemento exclusivo de la escritura mixteca. Por ello, cuando en la Matrícula de Tributos vemos que ciertas páginas contienen este tipo de representación afirmamos que sólo puede ser debida a que su tlacuilo fue educado en la tradición mixteca de representación gráfica.

Finalmente, hemos presentado el caso concreto del Manuscrito Aubin nº 20. Debido a las disfunciones que presenta consideramos que se trata de una obra realizada a mediados del siglo XVIII, bien como copia de un documento prehispánico, bien como original de tiempos coloniales con objeto de que pareciera antiguo. A causa de ello, la segunda opción asociaría histórica y conceptualmente al documento con, por ejemplo, los códices del Grupo Techialoyan, es decir, su gestación tendría el mismo motivo y se trataría de una falsificación con contenido verídico, si bien sus elementos iconográficos y escriturarios muestran ya ciertas 'irregularidades'.

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María de los Angeles Romero Frizzi

Spanish Conquest and Mesoamerican Mentality

Pages beyond count have been written about the conquest of Mexico-Tenochtitlán in 1521 and the events that followed: the wars in the different regions, the alliances made with native lords, the imposition of the indigenous town council, the new system of tribute, the systems of forced labor, the *congregaciones*, the establishment of a new religion, the epidemics, etc. A small number of scholars have tried to understand the ways in which Mesoamerican societies experienced those years and how they adapted themselves to the transformations caused by the colonial period (Gibson 1967; Farriss 1984; Gruzinski 1991; Lockhart 1991, 1992; Haskett 1992, 1996; Terraciano 2001; Wood 2003; Oudijk y Romero Frizzi 2003 and others).[1] Thanks to their work, a more complex history has begun to emerge that shows the ability of the native societies to reply to the changes brought about by the colonial system. Nevertheless, many aspects of how the indigenous peoples understood those years of contact remain to be explored.

Understanding the explanations the Mesoamerican peoples forged in the sixteenth century in response to the violence, the diseases, and all of the impositions of the colonial system is a difficult task. This requires an understanding of the Mesoamerican philosophy prior to the Conquest as this contributed to the explanations and the answers contrived by the men and women who lived through the experience. In this paper, I try to illuminate certain aspects of this Mesoamerican thought and understand it as one of the many factors – a very important one – that entered into play during the sixteenth century. This is a difficult goal to accomplish but one that is made possible thanks to the work of scholars such as Miguel Leon Portilla (1956), Alfredo Lopez Austin (1989, 1990), and Guilhem Olivier (2004). Even so, the proposed task is ambitious. It is difficult to discuss both Mesoamerican thought and how it explained – and was transformed by – the Spanish presence in just a few pages. In order to facilitate my task, this paper is limited to a comparison of two texts, one prehispanic and the other colonial. The first is the *Codex Vindobonensis*, a Mixtec book created during the prehispanic period. The second is the primordial land title of the Zapotec town of Juquila, a document known as the *Memoria*

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[1] Particular thanks are due to Maarten Jansen, Gabina Aurora Pérez Jiménez en Laura van Broekhoven for the organization of the Amsterdam Colloquium; to Michel Oudijk, Geert Bastian van Doesburg and Guilhem Olivier for their comments, and to Laura Waterbury for her translations into English.

de Juquila, which was written at some time towards the beginning of the seventeenth century (Archivo General de la Nación, México [AGN], Tierras 335. 3 ff. 9-12 v).

The Sacred Books

We know that before the Conquest there existed in Mesoamerica whole archives that housed the books of the priests, the religious texts that narrated history, the books that contained stories of empires and records of lineages; maps, and various other kinds of writings (Alva Ixtlilxochitl 1997, I: 468). Some of these books were lost during the pre-hispanic period itself. Others were burned during the Conquest or later. Very few survive today. Among them is the Codex Vindobonensis (Anders et al. 1992), which will form the basis of my analysis. Using its pages I will try to delve into a few of the central principles of Mesoamerican thought. The degree of change that began after 1521 can then be discerned by comparing this Mixtec codex to the document from Juquila. The results I have obtained from this comparison are preliminary. In order to achieve greater certainty, it will be necessary to study a larger corpus of documents coming from different regions. However, this comparison allows me to propose some avenues for future investigation.

The Codex Vindobonensis was born out of a greater Mesoamerican philosophy and then further enriched by a specifically Mixtec perspective. Trying to understand central aspects of this philosophy, discovering them in the pages of the codex, is a task possible thanks to the work that has already been done by Maarten Jansen and Gabina Aurora Pérez Jiménez (1992).[2] I will not go into all the details of the codex. My intention is only to discuss the great explanatory power it has for questions about the relationships between human and sacred power and the cycles of time. This is important to discuss because I believe these concepts played a central role in the ways in which the indigenous peoples understood the Conquest and the colonial system.[3] It is equally important to think about how the content of the codex was experienced by the Mixtecs. That is to say, what role did this book play in their lives? This 'lived' dimension of the codex can be approached by comparing it to other sacred books like the Bible and the Koran (Solomon and Higgins 1996).[4]

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[2] Although there are various studies on the Codex Vindobonensis, I base myself on the interpretation of Anders, Jansen, and Perez Jiménez 1992.

[3] Reflecting on the influence of time on humankind was central to ancient Mesoamerican thought, from which stems the importance of the calendar as the great director of human actions. This topic is highly complex and will not be talked about here. I will concentrate on those aspects of Mesoamerican philosophy that dealt with the cosmic cycles. I base myself primarily on the studies of Leon Portilla (1956), Olivier (2004) y López Austin (1989a: 58-81 y 1989b).

[4] There are innumerable examples of sacred histories that explain the origins of a people and their history, but many were originally preserved orally, like the origin myths of the native peoples of North America, the Quechuas, and others that were subsequently written down in colonial times. For example, for the Quechuas see Gary Urton's book (2004).

As understood by their adherents, the Bible and the Koran were not written by men. They are the word of God. The first five books of the Bible (also known by Jews as the Torah) were not written by Moses. Rather, he was merely the instrument through which God had the grace to manifest himself to mankind.[5] Similarly, for Muslims, the Koran contains the word of Allah, revealed to Mohammed through the angel Gabriel (Masson 1967: L y LI).[6] The Koran is the eternal and uncreated word of God.

If we accept that sacred books were not written by men, then who gave the Mixtec scribe the sacred message contained in the pages of the codex today known as the Vindobonensis? Who inspired the words written by the Zapotec scribe in the Memoria de Juquila? Many Mesoamerican books, like the Koran, were written in poetic rhythm and are, because of their beauty, works of universal literature. But at the same time, they represented the divine word and were unquestionable. They contained answers to eternal questions about the origins of life, the nature of the world, of the plants, the days, and time. They served as a base for the respect due to the ancestors and to the ruling lords. They were the foundations of law (Solomon & Higgins 1996:1-7).

It is also important to situate the sacred texts in another context: their relationship to history, a subject that is difficult to handle because of the differences that exist between the modern Western idea of history and the one that exists within the Mesoamerican books. When researchers write histories of other peoples, they often forget that those peoples have their own ideas about the passage of time and of history itself (Jansen 1997: 11; Navarrete 1997). Guided by our ways of thinking, we have invested hours trying to reconstruct indigenous history in accordance with our own categories, searching for concrete facts in a narrative based on a different understanding of events (Olivier 2004: 229-242). On occasions we have recognized that we are standing before a history constructed on a different conceptual base. But even when we have recognized that fact, we have divided indigenous history into two periods: a mythical time that unfolds in close relationship with sacred beings and an historical time that is made up of 'real facts', like the genealogies of rulers and chronicles of battles. But within these 'real' facts we ignore the presence of an eminently religious Mesoamerican thinking (Oudijk y Romero Frizzi 2003: 29).

Both approaches to the understanding of indigenous history are influenced by our own vision of history. Historians who see their subject matter as a succession of real events construct their analysis on the basis of concepts proper to a European philosophy that emerged out of the Renaissance, evolved into the Rationalism of the eighteenth century, and persists today, exerting a strong influence on contemporary thinking (Urton

[5] D. Masson in his introduction to the Koran 1967, pp.L-LI

[6] During the life of the Prophet the revelations were transmitted orally or written onto palm leaves, pieces of leather, or bones. Upon Mohammed's death in 632, his followers started to collect his revelations, which took the form we are familiar with today.

2004:15).[7] Scholars who divide history into a primordial age and an historical one are mixing two different concepts of history: one religious and the other Cartesian. This implies a serious methodological problem in that it applies two different theoretical approaches to texts that were born of another philosophical worldview entirely.

Let us look at this from a more specific context. The Codex Vindobonensis (obverse), which belonged to the ruling family of Tilantongo, in the Mixteca Alta of Oaxaca, depicts in its first pages the creation of the days and nights, the birth of the first man and woman, the birth of the sacred Lord 9 Wind Quetzalcoatl, among other miraculous occurrences (Códice Vindobonensis [CV]: 52, 51). These events have been located in a primordial time, in close relationship with the sacred. However, when we study the lineages of the rulers and their actions (on the reverse side of the Vindobonensis, for example), we use a positivist approach and we conceive of them as concrete events. This is much like how we envision the Bible. The story of the Garden of Eden, for example, takes place in primordial time. The subsequent pages that depict the Exodus, the journey to the promised land, are about historical times, just as is the story of Abraham and his descendents. But we should not divide history like that if we want to understand the thinking of the people who wrote it. Yahweh was a constant presence in the history of his people, in the earthly paradise, in the miracle of the Red Sea, in the gift of the Ten Commandments, and in many other events. Returning to the Mixtec text we need to ask ourselves, how did the power of the divine Lord 9 Wind Quetzalcoatl influence the actions of the dynasty of Tilantongo?[8]

There are many other examples of a similarly religious vision of history. If you look at the works of soldier-chroniclers like Cortés and Bernal, writing both during and after the Conquest, you can find mention of the presence of God and of sacred beings like Saint James during crucial moments in battle. Moreover, the friars who came to evangelize in the wake of the military conquest carried with them a vision of history that was impregnated with their faith in God and his plan. For them, the history of the human race was the history of its salvation. It was in order to help in this sacred task that they had come to these lands. In a similar way, the Mesoamerican peoples lived their relationship with time and the sacred in the unfolding of each day, in the calendrical divisions based on the numbers 13 and 20, in the centuries, and in the great cosmic cycles. The divine powers were present in the daily labors of the peasants and in the deeds of rulers, in wars, migrations, and in the foundations of kingdoms. Most importantly, these ideas did not disappear with the Conquest.

[7] Gary Urton, studying the foundational myth of the Inkas, undertakes a detailed analysis of this problem.
[8] Nancy Farriss (1987) presents an interesting reflection on how an historicist concept of history and a cyclical concept of time could have been combined.

History in a Nahua Codex

In the first pages of the Nahua codex known as the Vatican A (Codex Vaticano Latino 3738), painted during the decade of 1560, there are references to four ages or great cosmic cycles.[9] The first of these was populated by giants and was destroyed by a great flood. The second age came to an end through the power of the wind. The humans who lived during it were transformed into monkeys. The third age was destroyed by fire and the fourth, which began in the area of Tollan, was lost as a result of vice. At the end of it, it rained blood and its people died of fright.

After describing these great cycles, the codex illustrates the beginning of a new age, when the people who survived the cataclysm that had brought the previous one to an end left the Seven Caves in order to begin a long journey in search of the land where they would found their kingdom. There are a series of pages in the codex with glyphs representing the years and their related events until, finally, on page CII, in the year 8 Rabbit, or 1369, Tenochtitlán was founded in the present location of Mexico City.[10] After this scene, the narration in the codex continues year by year, relating battles, famines, and deaths. The last recorded event takes place in 1549 and represents the death of the bishop Friar Juan de Zumárraga (Códice Vaticano-Latino 3738: 306).[11] Seven year glyphs follow without associated events and the annal ends. It is thought that this codex was written around 1560 but that the last years were not recorded. It does not clearly depict the beginning of a new age, but the omens that it summarizes in the years 1525, 1528, and others, point to a presentiment of its coming (Olivier 2004: 246).

The idea of great cosmic cycles or ages that appears painted in the Codex Vatican A was central to the concept of time of the ancient Mesoamericans and was a constant in their vision of history. Time was seen as a sequence of creations and destructions, of light and darkness (Jansen 1997; Olivier 2004:279). It was an explanation forged to understand better the existence of ruins of earlier cities and the presence of giant bones and diverse beings such as monkeys and fish. It was also an explanation based in philo-

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[9] The Codex Vaticanus A is a copy of another very similar codex, the one called Telleriano-Remensis, that was painted around 1562 or 1563. Its content is ritual, calendrical, and historical. It is divided into various parts. In the first it presents the ages and continues on with an 18-month calendar with drawings of the gods that preside over each period of 13 days. The second part is a *tonalpohualli* of 260 days. The third part corresponds to an historical annal that covers the years 1198 to 1562 and has, at the end, two pages written in Spanish without drawings and with historical information for the years 1519 to 1557. See also the edition and the commentary by Anders and Jansen (1996).

[10] The different versions of the migration and of the history contained in the codices and the manuscripts do not agree. This is possibly due to different interpretations of history undertaken by different groups. For example, Durán's informants told him that Mexico City was founded in 1318. Taken from notes to the Vaticanus A, p. 224.

[11] There is a year of difference between when the bishop died and when this codex says he died. Other sources give 1548. p.306.

sophical principles that understood time as a series of epochs governed by sacred forces. In his book on Tezcatlipoca, the deity of the smoky mirror, Guilhem Olivier (2004) suggests that the succession of ages came about as the result of conflicts between divine beings. The fall of the city of Tollan, cited in the pages of the Nahua codex and frequently mentioned in other books from Central Mexico, should be understood as the end of the age ruled over by Quetzalcoatl. The fall of a political powerhouse, such as Tollan or other important ancient cities, was a real-life reflection of great sacred conflicts. The new political formations that were born out of the destruction were accompanied by profound changes in the daily lives of the people and by transformations in political relationships that were adjustments to the power of different ascendant sacred beings.[12]

Out of this vision of history comes the widely known story of how the arrival of the Spanish ships on the Gulf coast of Mexico was understood as the arrival of a new divine lord, of Quetzalcoatl, who was returning to rule. In effect, at first, the Mexicas and other peoples of this land, thought that the return of Quetzalcoatl had been recorded in their sacred books, but the passage of the years showed their interpretation to be wrong. The arrival of Cortés and his men did not correspond with the arrival of that god, though it did correspond with the establishment of a new sacred power: Spanish power with its saints, virgins, and Christs. A new age had begun.

This vision of time as a succession of ages is clearly depicted in the Codex Vatican A, but it is also present in many other codices and ancient texts and continues to exist in the oral traditions of various indigenous communities of Mexico (De la Fuente 1977:347; Henestrosa 1984:11-12). Their cosmic vision of time is intimately related to their way of conceiving of history and to the explanations they gave of concrete events, understanding them as great transformations in the political sphere.

Codex Vindobonensis and History

Not all codices make reference to the succession of all of the ages. Some of them tell only of the last epoch, the one in which they were written, and such is the case with the Codex Vindobonensis. This book was born out of a Mesoamerican way of thinking that explained history in terms of battles between divine beings. That is why one of its most important pages depicts the birth of a new sun, the planetary body that signaled the emergence of a new power (Códice Vindobonensis [CV]: 23). In this case it is the power of the dynasty of Tilantongo that would rein over the Mixteca, supported by and tightly linked to the sacred power of Lord 9 Wind Quetzalcoatl.[13]

The central theme of the Mixtec book is the sun of this age. It is a well-known story but it is important to revisit its most important pages keeping in mind that they do not

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[12] See Nancy Farriss for information on the Maya.

[13] This explanation is based on the interpretation of page 48 of the Codex Vindobonensis, in which we see 9 Wind descend over a glyph that is now largely illegible. Sebastian van Doesburg has interpreted this glyph as the one representing Tilantongo. I appreciate his generosity in communicating ideas to me that are central to my understanding of the codex.

depict scenes from a mythical time but, rather, an historical time as it was understood within the framework of Mesoamerican philosophy. This is also important because the purpose of this paper is to compare the prehispanic indigenous thought that is represented in the codex with that which survived the Conquest and can be found in the Zapotec document from Juquila.

The Foundation of the Kingdoms

'The ancient book tells of how the kingdoms of the Mixteca were founded.' These words were used by Maarten Jansen and Aurora Perez in the forword to their interpretation of the Codex Vindobonensis and they neatly summarize the central theme of their book called *The Foundation of the Kingdoms of the Mixteca* (Anders, Jansen, and Perez Jiménez 1992: 51). The foundation is an event both human and divine in which sacred deeds mark the events of history. The codex begins by relating something that happened in the heavens, when the days were separated from the nights and were given order (CV: 52).[14] Here is the Mixtec genesis, the first moment of a history that is both very Mixtec and very universal. During it we encounter an ancient noble couple. They are the grandparents who precede the birth of the first pair, of a man and a woman (Lord and Lady 1 Deer), who themselves give birth to a group of divine beings and strange creatures such as Lord Fire, Lord Wind, the spirit serpents, and many more (CV: 51).

There are many dates included in the pages of the codex, as well as sacred trees, religious ceremonies, and, somewhat later, the birth in the heavens of the noble Lord 9 Wind Quetzalcoatl. This being has many names among which are: From Him Come the Songs, He who Carries the God (*Ñuhu*), The Lord who is Bathed in the Smoke of Burned Incense, The Conqueror, and The Warrior (CV: 49). Ultimately, 9 Wind is the central character in this history. He greets the ancestors in the heavens and, from them, receives the attributes of power: the ceremonial clothes, the shell ornaments, the arrow, and the spear-thrower. He also receives the temples with their cults dedicated to the sacred bundle, to Xipe, to the conch, and to the *baston de mando* (the staff of authority). With them, he descends to the earth (CV: 48). It is 9 Wind who will exercise his influence on this new age that is beginning. His divine strength will be the foundation of the power of the lords of Tilantongo who will be born from the tree of Apoala and will govern over the Mixteca (CV: 37).

Lord 9 Wind is received on earth with offerings. This is followed by the years of creation when he separates the waters from the earth (CV: 47). Then the codex presents a

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[14] The references contained in the Codex Vindobonensis are taken from the commentary by Anders, Jansen, and Pérez Jiménez (1992), which should be consulted for a more complete explanation of the contents. In this paper I present only a very brief summary of the main theme of the codex with the purpose of comparing it to the Memoria de Juquila.

long succession of glyphs of rivers, hills, plains, and dates. This has been interpreted by Maarten Jansen and Gabina Aurora Pérez Jiménez as an elegy to the places of the Mixteca, to which Lord 9 Wind brought the waters of heaven (Anders et.al. 1992: 97-111). It precedes the foundation and the assumption of power over the earth by the dynasty of Tilantongo.[15] Following the Memoria Zapoteca and other documents, I believe this sequence of places can be interpreted as an ancient migration.

The actual foundation of the dynasty of Tilantongo is a complex event. It is comprised of various scenes and begins with the preparation of the tree of origin in Apoala and the birth of the first pair of governing nobles (Anders et. al 1992: 123 footnote 2; CV: 37).[16] After this, the first ceremony of New Fire takes place, celebrated by 9 Wind (CV: 32). History as it is preserved in oral tradition helps us to understand this page of the codex. The Mixtecs remember how their grandparents used to tell them that when their towns were founded, the priests performed the ceremony of the New Fire.[17] Thus, in a similar way in the codex we can see that before the New Fire ceremony, measurements of the land are taken, possibly from the center of the new settlement. Four temples are raised and altars are constructed. Afterwards, Lord 9 Wind gives names to each landmark and formal possession is taken of them (Anders et al 1992: 127-129, and CV: 32, 31).

After taking possession, the rite of name-giving is performed (CV: 30, 29). The sacred lord, 9 Wind, perforates the earlobes of the lords that were born from the trees of Apoala and he gives them each a second name. Thus, Lord 7 Serpent Mouth of Sacrifice receives the name of Eagle that Descends. Lord 2 Dog, Serpent of Malinalli, receives various names including Earthquake and Fire. The ceremony is repeated with all the nobles (Anders et al 1992: 133; CV: 30). After this come the rituals dedicated to the god of rain, the harvest, pulque, and hallucinogenic mushrooms. Finally, this foundational cycle concludes with the splendid birth of the sun, the symbol of the emergence of a new power.

The second New Fire ceremony precedes a central moment: the delimitation of the lands that would belong to the dynasty of Tilantongo. These are the lands that would sustain it, a sacred land, the roots of its identity, where the rulers would found their temples and their palaces and where they and their descendants would live. The lands to the North, the Plains of the Burning Tobacco, are marked, as are the ones towards where the sun rises, the west, the south, and the ones in the region of the serpents (CV: 20, 18, 17, 14, 12). These pages of the codex depict the formal taking possession of these places. In each possession, further religious ceremonies such as the New Fire and the sacrifice

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[15] The foundation of the kingdoms begins on page 113 of Anders et. al. (1992) and page 37 of the codex.

[16] The codex makes reference to the Ñuhu. The oral tradition of various Mixtec towns preserves the knowledge that these communities were founded by beings endowed with special abilities who could move mountains.

[17] During a course attended by young Zapotecs and Mixes, organized by Servicios del Pueblo Mixe, the young people identified this scene in the codex.

of birds are performed and names are given to each parcel. It is the beginning. It is year one. The codex, the divine word that granted the dynasty of Tilantongo the right to govern the lands of the Mixteca, then comes to an end.

The Memoria de Juquila

Let us leave the prehispanic Mixteca and travel to a different time and a different place. It is the year 1715 and we find ourselves in the Sierra Zapoteca, the mountains to the north of the city of Oaxaca. The town of Juquila has spent years involved in a conflict with its neighbor, Tanetze, over the ownership of some abandoned lands that once belonged to one of its old subject communities, the town of Yacuini or Totolinga. One day, the leaders of Juquila decided to make a trip to the Spanish town of San Ildefonso de la Villa Alta, in order to give the alcalde mayor, the Spanish judge, two documents that they saw as proof of their rights over the land. They were written in Zapotec and they began with the words, '*Memoria probança rodia neda xotao bene yetzegoa ....*' That is, 'Memoria and proof make I, ancestor of the natives of Juquila ...' (AGN, Tierras 335:5, f. 9).

Because of these opening words, I have called the document the Memoria de Juquila. It is the primordial land title of this community. It is dated 1521 but was probably written at some point near the end of the sixteenth century or even towards the beginning of the seventeenth. Most importantly, it represents the historical vision of the Zapotecs. We do not know if this indigenous group painted codices comparable to those of the Mixtecs. If those books once existed, they are now lost. However, the Zapotecs shared with the Mixtecs and other Mesoamerican peoples a similar vision of history and when they learned how to write in the Latin alphabet, they committed this vision to paper.

There are numerous other Sierra Zapotec primordial land titles written during the colonial period, but the traditional style of the Memoria de Juquila, with its inserted rhymes and choruses and very ancient structure, facilitates its comparison with the Mixtec codex. It is important to clarify why I have not compared the Codex Vindobonensis with a colonial Mixtec text. The answer is simple: there are no colonial period documents from the Mixteca written in the Mesoamerican tradition. We do know that the great philosophical tradition contained within the ancient codices was preserved in written form in the Mixteca at least until the mid-seventeenth century (Burgoa [1671] 1989:I, 288). However, those books were lost. In addition, during the early colonial period the Mixtec peoples, guided by their leaders, experienced a process of accelerated change resulting in the strong Spanish influence that can be see in their religious and civil architecture, in their economy, in the lifestyle of their nobility, and in their documents (AGN, Tierras, 400:1, f. 55; Romero Frizzi 1996:117, 118; Terraciano 2001:15). There are many documents from the sixteenth century that are signed by Mixtec caciques in a clear and steady hand at the same time that many Spaniards did not know how to write (AGN, Civil, 516, f. 4v.). In addition, there exist an infinite number of petitions for land

grants, with their accompanying maps, that represent an attempt to insure the ownership of land from within the precepts of Spanish law, the same purpose that had earlier been fulfilled by their sacred codices.

The Comparison

In attempting a comparison of the codex from the fifteenth century with the Zapotec document, the first thing that becomes apparent is the relative simplicity of the Zapotec manuscript compared to the richness of images and metaphors of the Mixtec codex. It is impossible to ignore that between the two lies the Spanish Conquest. But that is precisely the point of this paper: to reflect on the impact of Spanish rule on indigenous thought as represented in their documents.

The comparison is difficult and risky since it involves two different geographic areas and two different ethnic groups, each with their own histories and processes. Despite this, it is possible to discern within the Zapotec manuscript a continuity of the great themes of the prehispanic codex: the establishment of a new power, the foundation of a town, and the delimitation of its lands. If the central theme of the Mixtec codex was the establishment of the authority of the dynasty of Tilantongo under the sacred auspices of Lord 9 Wind, what happened to that vision of dynastic genesis when the indigenous kingdoms were defeated and witnessed the establishment of Spanish domination?

To accomplish this comparison, I will first remind the reader of what was depicted in the Mixtec codex and then discuss it in reference to what was written by the Zapotecs of Juquila. This comparison will allow us to get closer to the way in which indigenous thought understood the Conquest and its accompanying transformations. In addition, the comparison will be conducted by making reference to the great themes of the Mixtec codex.

The Great Moments in History

The Beginning in the Mixtec Codex: the sacred history of Tilantongo begins in a primordial time in the heavens. This is where the ancestors are when they give origin to the first pair of humans.

The Beginning in the Zapotec title: the Memoria de Juquila begins with the words of the four ancestors:

> Memoria probanza
> hago yo antepasado de los naturales de Juquila
> Yo me llamo rijhinelam=

y tanbien = Nalao
y ttanbien = goque, beehoxila = bilaseehe
y tanbien = biginixila
estta es-somos-cuatro ...

(AGN, Tierras 335:5, f. 9 v.)

Memory and proof
make I, ancestor of the natives of Juquila
My name is rijhinelam=
and also = Nalao
and also = goque, beehoxila = bilaseehe
and also = biginixila
this is – we are – four
(AGN, Tierras 335:5, f. 9 v.)

The important role of the ancestors, present as much in the colonial discourse as in the prehispanic and contemporary ones, makes it clear that, just as the Koran contains the words of Allah as communicated to mankind through the Prophet, the words recorded in the Mesoamerican codices and the primordial deeds must also have been those of the ancestors. These books preserved the wisdom that guaranteed the power of a dynasty and its lands.

The Journey with the Symbols of Power

In the Mixtec codex: while in the heavens, after the moment of creation and after his own birth from a large flint, Lord 9 Wind receives from the ancestors the attributes that invest him with sacred power: his regalia, his ornaments, and the temples with which he descends to the earth.

In the Zapotec title: the ancestors of Juquila did not go to the heavens, but they did undertake a journey: to Spain. They went to see the great king, goque dao rey,[18] to ask for his assistance. And in that voyage we can see a continuity between prehispanic Mixtec ideas about power and colonial Zapotec ones. Lord 9 Wind received his investiture from the ancestors; the Zapotec grandfathers received political authority and religion from the king of Spain. However, there is an important difference in the two accounts. The Zapotecs did not receive the investiture for themselves. Instead,

Dio un padre ministro = fray bartholome de olmedo
Y tambien nos dio un alcalde mayor = se llama Don Juan de Salinas
hombre que trajo [el] Libro de [la] ordenansa Real

[18] In fray Juan de Córdova, (1578), we can read: *Señor de casta, Coquì. Si es grande Coquitào.*

hombre quien ha de balansear = [poner] derecho
y [la] zedula Real = Del Rey nuestro Señor = del Gobierno de su magestad
y tambien [dio] un padre ministro = [quien] traia orden de bautizar...' (AGN, Tierras 335:5, f. 16).
He [the king] gave a father minister = friar bartholome de olmedo
And he also gave us an alcalde mayor = his name is Don Juan de Salinas
man who brought the book of Royal ordinances
man who is to create balance = institute justice
and the royal letters of patent = from the King our Lord = from the government of his majesty
and he also gave a father minister = who brought an order to baptize (AGN, Tierras 335:5, f. 16).

The Zapotecs of Yacuini, a town subject to Juquila, knew that its ancestors had not actually gone to Spain. They went to Oaxaca to await the return of the noblemen of Juquila to receive from them the symbols of power. They wrote, 'Fuimos a esperar cuando vino la ley de dios en Oaxaca.' That is, 'We went to wait when the law of God came from Oaxaca.' (AGN, Tierras 335:5, f. 8)

The Migration

After the voyage to Spain, the ancestors of Juquila returned to their mountains, passing through Mexico City, the Alameda, and Oaxaca City. Then they entered into the mountains to begin a long journey, a trip full of remarkable events like the one that took place at Yaxitzadao, the sacred hill of the Zapotecs. There, the Zapotecs met up with the Spanish and they later divided into various groups. This split, occurring in a sacred place, seems to suggest an ancient unity of the Zapotecs of this part of the Sierra, of the Zapotecs called benexitzos.

The Juquila ancestors continued their wanderings and after passing through various places, they returned to their sacred mountain in order to erect a cross of gold, undertake the ceremony of baptism, and lay the foundations of the church.

adonde se baptiso = su antepasado de los zapoteco
= adonde se llama = Yaaxitzaadaoo
y ttanbien; alla; se señalo; de brasos de codos = adonde; se abrio el simiento
de la yglesia de los; zapoteco =
(AGN, Tierras 335:5, f. 16 v.)

where they were baptised = the ancestors of the zapotecs
= where it is called = Yaaxitzadaoo
and there they measured [using their] arms and elbows = where the foundations were laid
of the church of the Zapotecs =

They began to walk again, passing through many places, naming each one of them, until they arrived at where the Spanish founded Villa Alta de San Ildefonso: 'there the

alcalde mayor got land' and they raised their chapel. That is where the baptism of the four ancestors took place. (AGN, Tierras 335:5, f. 16 v.)

Religious ceremonies, names and godparents

In looking for constants between the ancient Mixtec text and the more recent Zapotec one it becomes apparent that religious ceremonies play an important role in both. In the Mixtec codex these ceremonies include the New Fire, offerings of firewood and rubber, human and avian sacrifices, and ceremonial cleansings. In the colonial period the cleansing ceremonies remain but the other rituals disappear, or at least they do on the written page. The prehispanic ceremonies are replaced by Catholic liturgy, involving crosses and specfic rites such as baptism.

In the Zapotec document, baptism has substituted for the Mixtec ceremony in which the noble ancestors perforated their ears and were given their second names. On page 30 of the Mixtec codex, Lord 9 Wind performs a ritual cleansing and gives names and titles to a group of individuals (CV: 30; Anders et al. 1992: 132, 133). During the colonial period, the ancestors of the people of Juquila changed their names. From that point on in the text, Biguinixila is known as Melchor Martin.

> Yo biguinixila
> cuando me baptisaron
> me llamo don melchor martin
> I biguinixila
> when I was baptized
> I am called Don Melchor Martin

In this same way, the other ancestors' names were changed as well.

> se bautizó = Goque Beehoxila Bilazeehe
> su antepasado de los naturales de Juquila
> y le dieron = su nombre Juan reheseehe
>
> me bautizaron = yo riihinela
> = su antepasado = de los naturales, de Juquila
> = y me llamo = melchor perez
>
> = Nos bautizaron [a] = nosotros que fuimos; [a] España.
> (AGN, Tierras 335:5, f. 17)
>
> Goque Beehoxila Bilazeehe = was baptized
> the ancestor of the natives of Juquila
> and the gave his name [as] Juan reheseehe
>
> I riihinela = was baptized
> = the ancestor = of the natives of Juquila

= and my name is = melchor perez
We who went to Spain were baptized.
(AGN, Tierras 335:5, f. 17)

Let us look for a moment at the godparents in this ceremony. It is important to remember the role 9 Wind played in the prehispanic ceremony of giving names and as godfather in the wedding ceremony that the codex depicts elsewhere (CV: 35). Who were the godparents of the Zapotec grandfathers? Only two of them had a godparent: Biguinixila and Beoxila Bilasehe

= yo biguinixila
= cuando me baptisaron
= y me llamo don melchor marthin
= fue mi padrino = Don Francisco Saabedraa y ttanbien

= se bautizo = goque beehoxila bilazeehe
= su antepasado de los naturales de los de Juquila
= y le dieron = su nombre Juan reheseehe
= fue su madrina = doña cathalina de medina. (AGN, Tierras 335:5, f. 17)

= I Biguinixila
= when I was baptized
= and I am called Melchor Martin
= my godfather was Don Francisco Saavedra and also

= Goque Beehoxila Bilazeehe = was baptized
= the ancestor of the natives of Juquila
= and they named him = Juan reheseehe
= his godmother was = Doña Cathalina de Medina. (AGN, Tierras 335:5, f. 17)

We do not know who Don Francisco de Saavedra and Doña Catalina were. The Memoria de Juquila only says that Don Francisco was an ancestor of the people from Castile, most likely one of the conquistadors of the Sierra. It is not surprising that the Zapotecs would refer to the leaders of the Spanish as ancestors. Nothing is said of the woman.

These ceremonies illustrate the way the indigenous world understood relations of power, a power in which the political and sacred walked hand in hand, a power finely woven of networks of hierarchies. In the past, the ancestors had given the sacred accouterments to 9 Wind and he carried them to this world. Further on in the story, 9 Wind is the principle actor in the religious ceremonies, in the offerings, in the perforation of earlobes of the nobles, and in the ritual of the names. At the beginning of the seventeenth century, the Zapotec ancestors continued to occupy an important place for the people,

but their power had become secondary to the Spanish. Yes, the Zapotec ancestors went to Spain to gain the necessary authority, but the king gave them an alcalde mayor and a priest instead. Importantly, it is the Spanish who assume the role 9 Wind played in the naming ceremonies.

The Foundation of the Kingdoms and Taking Possession of the Land

All of the documents, the prehispanic and the colonial ones, conclude their narration with a possession-taking of the land. The Mixtec codex speaks of solemn moments when the sacred beings (the *Ñuhus*) are born, a process in which both human and divine figures participated (like Lady 1 Eagle, the grandmother of the river and goddess of the multiplication of the human race, Lords 4 Serpent and 7 Serpent, gods that inhabit a hill made by hand, and Lady 9 Reed of the Hair Braided with Serpents). It later records the ceremony where 'measurements were taken with ropes'.[19] The worked stones of the foundation were laid as were the rough stones for the altars and for the stairs. The construction was done in pyramidal form. The lands were 'tied' (they were measured and guaranteed)'. Then, '... Lord 9 Wind Quetzalcoatl drilled a New Fire to initiate religious observance' (CV: 32)

The Mixtec codex continues with the rituals of the sacred tree of Apoala, the harvest ceremony, and the rituals of the pulque and the hallucinogenic mushrooms. The ceremonies have paved the way for the arrival of the new sun, symbol of the foundation of the power of the dynasty of Tilantongo. In a grand finale, the pages that follow sing of the possession-taking of the land amidst further rituals and sacrifices. Measurements of the lands are taken with ropes again. The foundations of the altars are worked on. The fields are measured and assured. And the ceremonies are repeated across the cardinal points of the Mixteca Alta, in the North, West, East, South, and Center (CV: 21, 18, 17, 15, 14, 13).

The sacred history thus ends, full of power, of divine presences, of miracles that ratify the ties between 9 Wind and the dynasty that was born of Apoala and would govern the Mixteca during the Sun of this age.

And how do the Zapotecs end their story? Tradition managed to persevere through taking possession of the lands by the Zapotec ancestors is preceded by a great religious ceremony. In this case, it is celebrated by Friar Bartolomé de Olmedo. He searches for a place to found the church of Juquila, symbol and center of the new town. He blesses the water. He blesses the place where 'the chapel was built, where the foundations were lain' and blesses 'a tree that transformed itself into a holy cross.' The Zapotecs worshiped the chapel that was built, where their ancestors had been baptized, where there were

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[19] Chapter 7 of the interpretation of Anders, Jansen and Perez Jimenez (1992) is very important for the understanding of pages 32, 33, and 34 of the codex.

clarions, fifes, and flags, and the land was won.

Once the ceremony was done, each one of the four Juquila ancestors fixes the borders of his lands, naming each parcel and placing boundary markers. The documents ends thus,

> Y ganamos las tierras
> Donde puede cultivar nuestro favorecido
> Su antepasado de los naturales de Juquila
> Somos cuatro, y tambien este año fue todo esto
> [mil] quinientos veinte y un años.
> (AGN, Tierras 335:5, f. 19 v.)
> And we gained the lands
> Where our favored [people] can cultivate
> The ancestor of the natives of Juquila
> We are four, and also this was all in the year
> one thousand five hundred twenty and one.
> (AGN, Tierras 335:5, f. 19 v.)

Final Thoughts

Years later, the Zapotecs of Yatee, another community in the Sierra, wrote the following words:

... [When] the word of God came, brought by the lords, children of the Sun, who are called Spaniards and who came and entered through the great water of ocean with weapons of lightening and metals that thundered, they brought dogs that ate people and brought beasts that they rode on that scared us. And we left and we entered among the hills and caves because we had never seen them before and we thus felt much fear. And this happened when the children of the sun came to make as Christians and it is the truth.[20]

The Spanish Conquest was interpreted by the indigenous peoples in accordance with their ancient thought. There was no other way for them to understand the events they lived through since what was contained in their codices, and years later in the founding deeds of their towns (the so-called primordial land titles), were the sacred word. It was a word that, painted or written, had been communicated to mankind possibly by the sacred ancestors or possibly by the divine beings themselves, and which reminded men that their authority was born of the relationship that must be established with the sacred beings that operated in and reigned over each great cycle of time.

The Spaniards were a new cycle in history. They were children of the sun. That is why the Zapotecs of the Sierra and other Mesoamerican peoples adjusted their institu-

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20 Primordial title of San Francisco Yatee. A copy of this was generously given to me by the *Presidente de Bienes Comunales* of San Francisco Yatee.

tions and their beliefs to that cosmic moment. The sixteenth century churches that we admire today were not built stone by stone only because the friars insisted and rewarded the caciques and their workers. The discourse of power of the friars found a counterpart in the ancient philosophy that propelled the natives of this land to adjust their beliefs and institutions to a new historical cycle, to the sacred forces that entered into play in 1521.

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Michael Swanton

Multilingualism in the Tocuij Ñudzavui Region

Fr. Bernardino de Sahagún, writing together with his Nahuatl consultants in Central Mexico, asserted that the Mixteca was a multiethnic region that included the Chocholtec people amongst others. The Florentine Codex describes the land of the Mixtecs – *mixtecatlalli* in Nahuatl – as: 'It is on which the Mixtecs dwell, all the Pinome, the Chocholtecs, the Nonoalca.'[1] Located in one of the most linguistically diverse zones of Mesoamerica, the region known as the Mixteca continues to be home to speakers of Triki, Amuzgo, Nahuatl, Chocholtec (Ngiwa, Chochon, Chocho),[2] Ixcatec as well as Tu'un Savi or Mixtec.[3]

Within the Mixteca, a complex sociolinguistic situation existed in the Valleys of Coixtlahuaca and Tamazulapan-Teotongo (see Map), in which speakers of Chocholtec and Mixtec lived side-by-side. Some people knew both of these indigenous languages, or even others. Remarkably, an extensive corpus of writings written by the inhabitants of this region has survived. This corpus, which reaches back to the middle of the sixteenth century, was written, not only in Chocholtec, the most widely spoken language of this region, but also in Mixtec and Nahuatl. Such a trilingual corpus of texts is extremely uncommon and may be the only colonial period example in the present-day state of Oaxaca outside the central Valleys. In this article, we will examine these Mixtec and Nahuatl language texts from the Valleys of Coixtlahuaca and Tamazulapan-Teotongo in order to understand the interesting multilingualism of this region better.

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[1] '*iehoatl in ipan onoque mjxteca: in ie ixqujch cenpinotl, in chôchon, nonoale…*' FC, Book 11, Chptr. 12 (256).

[2] Today the word 'Chochon' is not used in the region and some perceive 'Chocho' as pejorative. Although 'Chocholteco' is a word of very recent date and many in the region do not use it, I will use the anglicized form 'Chocoltec' here, respecting the auto-designation that Chocholtec cultural actors have promoted. Following the proposal of Justiniano Domínguez Medel and Fausto Aguilar Domínguez (1997: 8), both of the Popoloca community of San Felipe Otlaltepec, I reserve the word Ngiwa as a collective term to refer to both Popoloca and Chocholtec.

[3] Los Reyes' description of the Mixteca extends so far as to include speakers of Cuicatec and perhaps Chatino ('la lengua de Cuiquila'). Los Reyes, 1593: Prologo (iii).
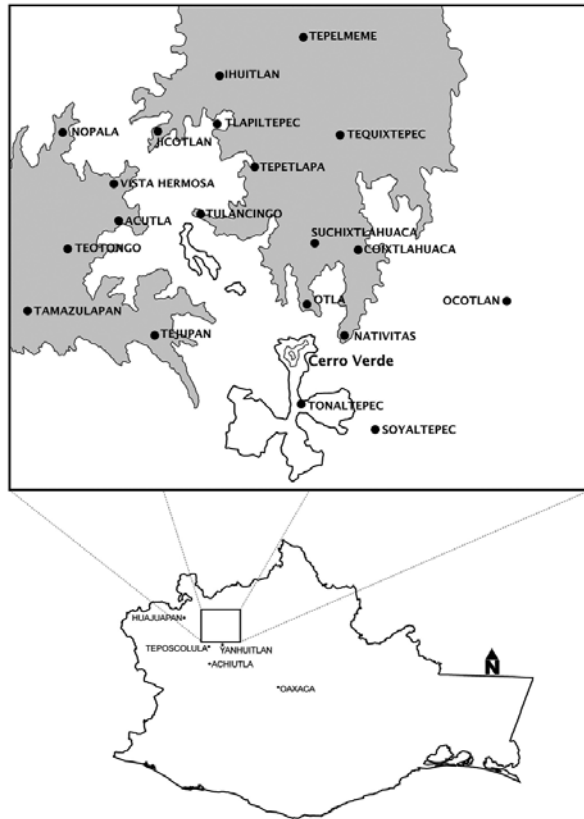
Map: The Valleys of Coixtlahuaca and Tamazulapan-Teotongo.

Today the dominant language in these two valleys is Spanish and multilingualism is limited to a small number of Chocholtec-Spanish bilinguals. There are only a handful of monolingual Chocholtec elders. Chocholtec-speakers are generally from one of three municipalities. In the small municipality of San Miguel Tulancingo, perhaps thirty or forty elders speak the language. Chocholtec is known by a somewhat wider range of speakers in the municipality of Santa María Nativitas and its two *agencias*, San Pedro Buenavista and Monteverde. In the municipality of San Juan Bautista Coixtlahuaca, Chocholtec is spoken only in the *agencia* of Santa Catarina Ocotlán, located to the east of the *cabecera*. There the language has the most generalized use of the three municipalities. Since the last generation has not learned the language in any of these Chocholtec-speaking municipalities, it is clearly endangered. There is also a very small number of speakers, or 'rememberers', of Chocholtec in the municipalities of San Miguel Tequixtepec, Santiago Tepetlapa, San Antonio Acutla, Teotongo and Vista Hermosa. Census

figures, though notoriously inaccurate, suggest slightly under 600 people speak the language in the state of Oaxaca today.[4]

Mixtec in the Valleys of Coixtlahuaca and Tamazulapan-Teotongo

In the prologue of his 1593 Mixtec grammar, Fray Antonio de los Reyes refers to the different regions of the Mixteca, one of which was the *tocuij ñudzavui*, '*que es chuchon Mixteca, por la participacio[n] y comunicacion que tienen con los Mixtecos y mucho parentesco*'. As is well known, *Ñudzavui* is the self-designation of the Mixtec People in their language. However the Mixtec word *Tocuij* appears but rarely in colonial documentation where it presumably means 'Green Lords/Foreigners' and refers to the Chocholtec people. The qualifying color may be related to the name of the highest mountain in the Mixteca, known today as 'Cerro Verde' and documented in Mixtec as *yucu cuij* early in the colonial period. This peak separates the predominantly Mixtec-speaking region of Tonaltepec and Teposcolula from the Chocholtec one of Coixtlahuaca.[5] Los Reyes goes on to explain the apparent ambivalence in the expression *tocuij ñudzavui*: '…*la lengua Chuchona…se habla en los pueblos de Cuixtlahuac, Texupa, y Tamaczulapa, y otros de su Comarca, en los quales tambien ay muchos Mixtecas, y en algunos de los dichos pueblos, son mas los mixtecas que los Chuchones…*' (Los Reyes, 1593: i-iii). [6]

Thus the *tocuij ñudzavui* would appear to include those communities where there was an important, even if minority, population of Chocholtec speakers together with Mixtec ones. The designation *tocuij* for the Chocholtecs is also attested in a letter from authorities of Coixtlahuaca dating to December 17, 1596. In this document however, the expression expression *ñuu tocuij,* or '*Chocholtec pueblos*', seems to be used excluding Tejupan and Tamazulapan and not qualifying them: '…*ninanducuñaha ñahadzehe ñunchaa tiquehui ñuu tocuiy yaha tucu ñaninatihuicha…*'. Translated: '…the woman

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[4] The *XII Censo General de Población y Vivienda* of 2000 grouped together Chocholtec and Popoloca under the rubric 'Chocho-Popoloca', for which 585 speakers were counted in the state of Oaxaca.

[5] *Tocuij* finds an interesting parallel with the Mixtec name for the Zapotec people, *Tocuisi*, or 'White Lords/Foreigners'. The preposed morpheme *to* is probably the apocoped noun *toho*, which might be best glossed as 'respected person'. See Jansen 1989: 77 for discussion. My thanks to Maarten Jansen for having first suggested the association of *tocuij* with *yucu cuij*.

[6] A facsimile of Los Reyes' important and rare 1593 Mixtec grammar has never been published. A manuscript copy of this work made in 1867 (now Bibliothèque nationale de France, MS Amér. 75) by the Austrian Africanist Simon Leo Reinisch was purchased by the Count de Charencey (Anders, 1987) who re-edited and published the text in his *Actes de la Société Philologique* (Los Reyes 1890). The Charencey publication was re-printed in 1976 as VUPA No 14. There are some relatively minor discrepancies between the Charencey edition and the original, including pagination. In the original, the Prologue and Approbations are unnumbered. Here I refer to the page numbers of the original if they exist. However, as the 1976 publication is easily accessible, I put the corresponding page number of that edition in parentheses.

Table 1 Known Mixtec Writings from the Coixtlahuaca Valley[*]

1574	Two-line introduction to a list of people of the six barrios of Tequixtepec, [AAT-08]; transcribed in Doesburg (2002: 197).
1579	A land transfer, [AHJO, Ramo Tepozcolula, Civil, Legajo 21, exp. 10]; transcribed and translated in Jansen (1994: 93-94) and Terraciano (1994: 625).[**]
1596	Memorias of excessive tribute paid to Francisco Jiménez by the residents of San Jerónimo, Coixtlahuaca. [AHJO, Ramo Tepozcolula, Penal, Legajo 4, exp. 10].
1596	Two letters from the regidor and alcaldes of Coixtlahuaca regarding the widow of a murdered man. [AHJO, Ramo Tepozcolula, Penal, Legajo 4, exp. 21].
1597	Last will of Don Francisco de Mendoza prepared by the gobernador and alcaldes of Coixtlahuaca, [BNAH, Colección Antigua 797, ff. 67v-68].
1601	Letter from Don Felipe de Mendoza and Melchor de San Juan of Coixtlahuaca to alcaldes in Teposcolula regarding the theft of a horse, [AHJO, Ramo Tepozcolula, Penal, Legajo 5, exp. 46]; transcribed and translated in Terraciano (1994: 635-36).
1615	Brief addendum to the testament of Don Felipe de Mendoza of Coixtlahuaca, [BNAH, Colección Antigua 797, f. 49v]
1666	Four-line note added to the last will of Don Francisco de Mendoza by Juan de Zúñiga, [BNAH, Colección Antigua 797, f. 68].
ca. 1675	Memoria of Don Juan de Vera y Zúñiga, [Archivo Municipal de Natívitas].

[*] A diligencia in Mixtec regarding a death in Santa María Natívitas was issued by the alcalde mayor in Yanhuitlán in 1688 [APJO, Ramo Teposcolula, Penal, Legajo 19, exp. 23]. Don Juan de Zúñiga y Vera is named as cacique of Santa María. Nevertheless, since this document was almost certainly produced outside the Coixtlahuaca region, it is not included in the above table

[**] Terraciano relates this text to Tejupan, presumably because it was presented as an *instrumento* by Don Tomás de San Juan, a resident of this community. We have chosen to include it with the Coixtlahuaca documents since among the witnesses to the document was Don Francisco Maldonado, then *gobernador* of Coixtlahuaca, see Doesburg, 2003.

Table 2 Cognates with the <t> : <ch> /__<a> correspondence appearing in colonial writings from Teposcolula, Teotongo, Yanhuitlan and Coixtlahuaca[*]

	Teposcolula	Teotongo	Yanhuitlan	Coixtlahuaca
domain, seat	tayu	tayu	chayu	chayu
3rd person masculine enclitic	=ta	=ta	=cha	=cha
man	tay	tay	chay	chay
river	yuta	--	yucha	yucha
to write	taa	taa	chaa	chaa

[*] The Teposcolula data in this table come principally from Reyes, complemented by lexical items appearing in Alvarado's 1593 vocabulary of Mixtec. The Yanhuitlan data likewise come from Reyes, complemented by data appearing the Yanhuitlan cabildo proceedings published by Terraciano (2001: 384-95). The tokens of 'Teotongo' Mixtec are taken from LC-Ca, 99 and LT-Teo, 6.

Table 3 Comparison of pronouns from Teposcolula, Teotongo, Yanhuitlan and Coixtlahuaca

	Teposcolula	Teotongo	Yanhuitlan	Coixtlahuaca
1st person emphatic	nduhu	nduhu	njuhu[*]	njuhu
1st person enclitic	=ndi	=ndi	=nju[**]	=nju
3rd person masculine enclitic	=ta	=ta	=cha	=cha

[*] "…*dizen en Yanguitlan. juhu, aunque la pronunciacion de los naturales mas se inclina a decir, chuhu, con. c. y. h. que no a. juhu con. j, jota pero la costumbre esta ya en contrario en quanto al escriuir y cada vno podra seguir lo q[ue] mas gusto le diere*…" Los Reyes, 1593: Prologo (iv). Following the Dominican tradition of writing Mixtec, Reyes does not indicate pre-nasalization of word-initial consonants.

[**] Los Reyes suggests another informal first person pronominal enclitic (=nde) could be used if the speaker were a woman: "*Las mugeres en Yanguitlan dizen. yosasinde, yo como, yocononde, yo tejo, y ansi en los de mas verbos, dexando el chuhu, de Yauguitlan [sic pro: Yanguitlan], y el di, de Tepuzculula, dado que algunas falten en esto y vien el, chuhu*" Los Reyes, 1593: Prologo (iv). Since all surviving instances of the first person informal enclitic in the Coixtlahuaca Mixtec documentation concern men, it is not possible to confirm whether this could be the case in this region as well.

looked for him in Tejupan, Tamazulapan, the Chocholtec pueblos and also here [i.e. Coixtlahuaca], but he did not appear…'[7]

Interestingly, the expression *ñuu tohkuii* is still known by some of the few remaining Mixtec-speakers of Tejupan today.[8] It is translated as 'la Provincia', an expression used by elders in the area to refer to the predominately Chocholtec-speaking region, reaching from Teotongo in the west, eastwards through Acutla, Tulancingo and into the Coixtlahuaca Valley, but excluding Tamazulapan and Tejupan. Perhaps then the communities of Tejupan and Tamazulapan, though in the 'Chuchon Mixteca' (*tocuij ñudzavui*), did not qualify as Chocholtec pueblos (*ñuu tocuij* or *ñuu tohkuii*), precisely because the Chocholtec population was the minority.

In the same prologue, Los Reyes also identifies some systematic variation in the Mixtec spoken in this region. This is particularly valuable in the case of Coixtlahuaca, for which little material exists. He explicitly indicates the Mixtec variant spoken in Coixtlahuaca was related to that spoken in Yanhuitlan and different from the Teposcolula variant:

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[7] AHJO, Ramo Tepozcolula, Penal, Legajo 4, exp. 21. Terraciano (2001: 333; 1994: 517) first noted the presence of the word *tocuij* in this dossier. He refers to this dossier under the old reference, AJT, Criminal, leg. 1, exp. 85.

[8] Tejupan Mixtec is highly moribund. I am grateful to Sra. Luisa Rufina Ruíz Cruz (b. 1917) of Yuyusa, Tejupan for her kind assistance regarding the ancestral language of her community. A phonological study of Tejupan Mixtec tone has not been carried out, but in Sra. Luisa's pronunciation, ñuu tohkuii may be approximated as ñuú tōhkuíi..

…es vna sola lengua Mixteca, que corre muchas leguas, y se hallan diuersos modos de hablarla, y todos ellos se reduze[n] a los dos lenguas principales, q[ue] son la de Tepuzcu-lula, Yanguitlan, como raizes de las mas…A la lengua de Yanguitlan siguen los Mixtecas de, Cuixtlahuac, y se differencian en algunos vocablos, por que diziendo en Tepuzculula por el dia de mañana, yutnaa, dizen en Yanguitlan, yùtna, y en Cuixtlahuac, yucha, y para dezir mañana de mañana, dizen en Tepuzculula, yutnaa dzatnaa, y en Yanguitlan, yutna dzatna, y en Cuixtlahuac, yuchadzacha.

On the other hand, the Dominican grammarian is unequivocal in closely relating Te-jupan and Tamazulapan Mixtec to the Teposcolula variant:

En Texupan, en lugar del, duhu, [as in Teposcolula] *dizen, ruhu, y por el, doho, dizen, roho. La terzera persona es el, ta. como en Tepuzculula, y fuera desta pronunciacion de la. r. que no vsan en Tepuzculula, en lo de mas es muy conforme a su lengua…La de Tamatzulapa, tambien es muy conforme a la de Tepuzculula, aunque en la segunda persona no dizen. doho. sino, gu. y en esto differe* (Los Reyes, 1593: iv-vii).

Unfortunately, Los Reyes provides only a handful of examples of Coixtlahuaca Mix-tec, and the surviving writings in Mixtec from the Coixtlahuaca Valley are both few and generally brief. At present there are only seven extended Mixtec language texts known from the valley of Coixtlahuaca and three shorter notes (see Table 1). Mixtec-language glosses also appear on two sixteenth-century pictographic manuscripts from the val-ley: the *Lienzo de Nativitas* (Santa María Nativitas) and the *Lienzo de Coixtlahuaca II* (Berlin-Dahlem, Ethnologisches Museum).[9] Numerous Mixtec language toponyms appear in Spanish language sources. As Mixtec is now extinct in Coixtlahuaca, this documentation is all that remains of the Coixtlahuaca variant.

Although Los Reyes provides little information about Coixtlahuaca Mixtec, he devotes several paragraphs to notable differences between Yanhuitlan and Teposcolula Mixtec. Since he claims that Coixtlahuaca Mixtec largely coincides with the Yanhuitlan variant, it would be expected that Coixtlahuaca would be aligned in the same way regarding these differences. This expectation is generally confirmed in a cursory examination of the Coixtlahuaca Mixtec sources. Los Reyes notes '*comunmente, el, ta, de Tepuzculula. se buelue en Yanguitlan en, cha*'. This sound correspondence (Teposcolula <t>/__<a> : Coixtlahuaca <ch>/__<a>) is attested in the Coixtlahuaca Mixtec writings (Table 2). Los Reyes also indicates differences in the emphatic and enclitic pronouns between the Teposcolula and Yanhuitlan variants of Mixtec. Again, when compared with the available Coixtlahuaca documentation, this variant of Mixtec coincides with the Yanhu-itlan forms (Table 3). The Coixtlahuaca Mixtec documentation merits a more detailed analysis within the framework of a broader examination of the historical dialectology of Mixtec. Still, this preliminary review supports the claim of Los Reyes that Coixtlahuaca

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[9] See Doesburg (2001) for an analysis of the Mixtec-language glosses on the *Lienzo de Nativitas* and König (1984) for an analysis of those on the *Lienzo de Coixtlahuaca II*.

Mixtec is more closely related to the Yanhuitlan variant than to the Teposcolula one.[10] The Mixtec attested in the Chocholtec-speaking community of Teotongo, a *sujeto* of Tamazulapan, likewise corresponds to the Teposcolula variant as Los Reyes points out.

In light of these observations, the *memoria* of Don Juan de Vera y Zúñiga would appear at first glance to be anomalous. Since the author refers to himself as being of Coixtlahuaca (*tayu yodzocoo*) and since the document is kept in the municipal archive of Santa María Nativitas, the southernmost municipality of the Coixtlahuaca Valley, we would expect it to be written in the variant of Coixtlahuaca Mixtec, as is the *Lienzo of Natítivas*. However, regarding the two characteristics discussed, the text profiles itself as being written in a variant more akin to that of Teposcolula. Perhaps the document was written by a notary from another community. However, if the document does reflect the Mixtec spoken by Don Juan, another explanation might be possible.

The *memoria* probably dates to the second half of the seventeenth century and is written in a Mixtec full of honorific expressions. In it Don Juan also affirms the possession of *Tineñe*, called a *tayu aniñe* ('palace-domain') and *aniñe câhnu* ('large palace'), through Doña María Baptista y Zúñiga, his mother. However, he explains how she acquired this palace:

> …*aniñe chiyhocâni sasintonindeye siidz(utu..) don ju[an] de çuniga dona ysauel bap[tis]ta y çuniga – ycâ yyha yaha ninacuhuaya dzayhaya tonindeye don (domingo) de gusman dona m[ari]a de mendoça…don domi[n]go yaha niquidzaya testam[en]to ninacuhuaya dzicuya dona m[ari]a bap[tis]ta y çuniga sihi don thomas de uera stoho may ñadzaña tayu aniñe tineñe sadzeui ndudzaua ninacuhuaya ñuutayu s[an]to domi[n]go chiyhocâni…*

> …the palace at Chiyhocâni, which was of the late cacique, (my) great-grandfather, Don Juan de Zúñiga and Doña Isabel Baptista y Zúñiga. Thence this lord gave it to his son, the late cacique Don Domingo de Guzmán and Doña Maria de Mendoza…this Don Domingo made his testament and gave his niece, Doña Maria Baptista y Zúñiga and Don Tomás de Vera, my father, the palace-domain in Tineñe in the same fashion he gave the pueblo-domain Santo Domingo Chiyhocâni…[11]

Don Juan de Vera y Zúñiga is therefore claiming that through his mother he is the great-grandson of Don Juan de Zúñiga, cacique of Coixtlahuaca in the second half of the sixteenth century. Through other sources, it is known that Don Juan de Zúñiga was the son of Don Domingo de Mendoza (1519-1552), cacique of Tejupan and Coixtlahuaca (Doesburg 2003). Chiyhocâni is today known as Chocani, an *agencia* of Santiago Teju-

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[10] Other differences Los Reyes notes concern possessive and verbal morphology. This have not been systematically investigated in the Coixtlahuaca corpus. Reyes is also explicit that negation in both Yanhuitlan and Coixtlahuaca Mixtec is realized by means of the proclitic <tu> as opposed to the Teposcolula Mixtec <ña>, "…este tu es negacion en Yanguitlan y Cuixtlahuac…", Reyes, 1593: Prologo (iv). Nevertheless, the corpus provides several examples of the proclitic <ña> for the negation of verbal predicates.

[11] I thank Bas van Doesburg for his transcription of this interesting document.

pan. Although cacique of Santa María Nativitas through his father Don Tomás de Vera, Don Juan de Vera y Zúñiga inherited the small cacicazgo of Santo Domingo Chiyhocâni in Tejupan and the palace of Tineñe in Coixtlahuaca through his mother. It may be then the Mixtec registered in this text is that of Tejupan.

Throughout the *Tocuij Ñudzavui* region*,* indigenous language texts demonstrate the talents of local notaries as literate polyglots. In 1607 Juan Cabrera apparently wrote all the testaments from Teotongo, fourteen of which are conserved in the LT-Teo. They were all in Chocholtec, except for Don Andrés de Zárate's Mixtec language testament. In his testament, Don Andrés de Zárate mentions owning agricultural fields in Nguindandee, Ghanguithusagû, Nguithundu and Seningu, all Chocholtec place names. Interestingly, although Don Andrés gave the names of the Chocholtec barrios (called *sindi* in Chocholtec) of Sandathu and Ca/andaxu in Mixtec (Ytunchii and Nduhuayoo, respectively), he did not do so for the *sindi* Nguindandee and Thundu when identifying his lands. Among the other texts written by Juan Cabrera that year is the testament of Don Matías de Mendoza, which though in Chocholtec, contains a short section in Mixtec naming the lands left to daughter Gracia in Santa Cruz Ndacagû. Cabrera thus could write so fluently in Chocholtec and Mixtec that he could switch between the languages in the same text. The Coixtlahuaca fiscal Gabriel Ortiz shared this same talent. Ortiz penned the Chocholtec-language testament of Don Felipe de Mendoza December 17, 1615. After signing the testament however, Don Felipe remembered some pesos he had set aside and had Ortiz tack on an addendum to the testament leaving this money to Doña Lucia de Salazar and Doña María de Mendoza. This addendum was written in Mixtec and again signed by Don Felipe.[12] Perhaps the most curious case of such multilingualism is Luisa Chisii's testament of December 21, 1604. Luisa, a resident of the Tulancingo *sindi* of Tztenuquiñi, had her Chocholtec testament written by the pueblo's appointed notary for that year, Luis de los Reyes. Luis wrote over two dozen Chocholtec language testaments in 1604. Although he wrote Luisa's testament in Chocholtec too, in the middle of the text, he switches into Mixtec to record the date of the document, and then continues, without missing a beat, in Chocholtec: '…¶ *hay domingo oco ca quihui sica yoo deçebre de 1604. años. ndaa theerha testamento*…' Translated: '…Today Sunday twenty-one days walks the moon of December of 1604 years, thus is made the testament…'[13]

The phrase '*oco ca quihui sica yoo*' is the only example of Mixtec known from Tulancingo. It is quite probable other residents of Tulancingo knew Mixtec. When Domingo García Chicuiña, a resident of the Tulancingo *sindi* of Tzasihi, gave his confession in Tejupan, probably in 1605, he did so before the vicar, Fr. Blas de Santa Catarina. In 1608 friar Blas appears in Teposcolula as '*lector de casos de conciencia*' and the teacher

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[12] LT-Teo 6, 7 and BNAH, Colección Antigua 77, ff. 148-49v. A short note in Mixtec also accompanies the Chocholtec testament, dated February 18, 1616, of a person named only Xagaha, LT-Teo, 164.
[13] LT-Tul, 68.

of the Mixtec language. As there are no indications that he knew Chocholtec, it is probably a reasonable assumption that Domingo gave his confession in Mixtec.[14]

In these interesting examples of multilingualism among notaries, the calendrical names of persons are often given in the local language. The calendrical names appearing in the 1599 Mixtec-language accounts of Ca/andaxu are all in Chocholtec as are those appearing in Don Andrés' 1607 testament. And in Don Matías de Mendoza's Chocholtec testament, he gives the name of his mother, who was perhaps from the aforementioned Santa Cruz, as María Ñumahu, the Mixtec calendrical name for 6-Death. A 1587 letter written in Nahuatl to the cacique of Tequixtepec also mentions a man named Domingo Cipac Xirhuu, juxtaposing the Chocholtec name with its Nahuatl equivalent (Crocodile), as if to clarify the Nahuatl version.[15] Still, a few cases do exist where calendrical names were simply translated. In the 1596 *memoria* of San Jerónimo, written in Mixtec, Juan García´s calendrical name (8-Lizard) appears first in Chocholtec (*Xichhu*) and then later in the text in Mixtec (*Naqh*). An even more spectacular case of name translation appears in a document dating from 1573, in which the tequitlato of Juquila, located in the north of the Valley of Coixtlahuaca, is called Antonio Xuxu in Chocholtec, Antonio Acatl in Nahuatl and Antonio Xahuio in Mixtec (i.e. 6-Reed). Such cases however are rare in the documentation from the region.[16]

An overall tendency appears in the documentation to name pueblo-internal localities in the dominant language of the community, regardless of the language in which one is writing. In general terms, this probably reflects the scope of inter-lingual contact. Larger places that occur in discourse often are more likely to be translated from one language to another than more local names.[17] But the notaries' toponymic multilingualism perhaps also reflects more specific motives. Thus, this use of Chocholtec place names in Mixtec texts and the use of Mixtec ones in Chocholtec texts may reflect apprehension of potential misunderstandings. It certainly would have been in the interests of Don Andrés and Don Matías that their fields' locations were understood locally. In this sense, their multilingual texts are similar to documents like the 1733 map of Tamazulapan, known alternatively as the *Lienzo de Tamazulapan* or the *Lienzo Vischer III* (Basel, Museum der Kulturen). This document glosses Tamazulapan's boundaries in two languages: the glosses of the eastern, western and southern borders are in Mixtec, while those to the north on either side of the path '*para Santiago*' [i.e. Santiago Teotongo] are in Cho-

[14] LT-Tul, 99 and Vences Vidal 2000: 212.

[15] AAT-52, transcribed and translated in Doesburg 2002: 293-300.

[16] AHJO, Ramo Tepozcolula, Penal, Legajo 4, exp. 10 and AGI, Escribanía 160B, ff. 925, 1242. My thanks to Bas van Doesburg for having first brought these examples to my attention. Regarding the Chocholtec calendrical vocabulary, see Swanton and Doesburg 1996. Terraciano also notes that in 1618, María Ñututa (6-Water) of Tlaxiaco was also called María Xita, the Chocholtec calendrical name for 'water' (2001: 154).

[17] See Trapero's distinction between 'toponimia mayor' and 'toponimia menor' (1995).

choltec. The sixteenth-century *Lienzo de Coixtlahuaca II* glosses its boundaries in no less than three languages. Those to the northwest are glossed in Chocholtec, those to the northeast are in Nahuatl, while those to the south are in Mixtec. Four of the Nahuatl-glossed localities near the aforementioned Juquila also appear in the *Lienzo de Coixtlahuaca I* (Mexico City, Biblioteca Nacional de Antropología e Historia); however, in this document they are glossed in Chocholtec (Doesburg 2003:92). As was the case with the Chocholtec place names appearing in Don Andrés' testament and the Mixtec ones in Don Matías' testament, the choice of language for naming borders probably targeted specific audiences in order to avoid misunderstanding. Perhaps similar concerns were at work with the Mixtec date of Luisa Chisii's Chocholtec-language testament.[18] However another possible motive for including Chocholtec names in Mixtec texts could be language's well-known identity-forging qualities. When a list of persons of the six barrios of Tequixtepec was prepared in 1574, the introduction was written in Mixtec, but the names of the community's six barrios were given in Chocholtec. In this case, misunderstanding would probably not have been an issue; rather such names in Mixtec may have just come across as too foreign. The same was true for the indigenous names of persons; generally Chocholtec calendrical names were not translated into Mixtec, even when writing in this latter language. Likewise when Matías de Mendoza referred to his mother, he used her Mixtec calendrical name in his Chocholtec text. Like the Chocholtec barrios of Tequixtepec, the use of one language or another for persons' calendrical names was probably connected to notions of identity. Interestingly, it is these three dimensions – calendrical names, place names and dates – that are among the most conventionalized representation in pictographic narratives.[19]

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[18] This recalls two Nahuatl-language document from the region that switches into Mixtec in order to write dates: the *Libro de Cuentas de Santa Catarina Texupan*, also known as the *Codex Sierra*, and the so-called *Pintura de Tilantongo* (Oudijk and Doesburg, in press). Unlike Luisa Chisii's testament however, the other two documents record the dates according to the indigenous calendar.

[19] This non-translation of calendrical names in the indigenous language texts of the region might be relevant in accounting for the relatively frequent alternation of the calendrical numbers 1 and 8 in the Lienzos of the Coixtlahuaca Valley. The *Lienzo de Tlapiltepec* (Toronto, Royal Ontario Museum) appears to be one of the most innovative, frequently having 8 where other documents have 1 or 8. For example, the maternal ancestor of the primordial couple Lord and Lady 12 Flint is called Lady 8 Jaguar in the *Lienzo de Tlapiltepec* and Lady 1 Jaguar in the *Fragmento Gómez de Orozco* (whereabouts unknown) and the *Lienzo de Tequixtepec I* (San Miguel Tequixtepec). It has been suggested that such alternations can be accounted for in the Chocholtec language special calendrical vocabulary, in which the numbers 1 and 8 are both <ni> (cf. Jansen cited in Johnson 1994: 128; Swanton and Doesburg 1996). That is, in Chocholtec these two calendrical day numbers would have been homonyms or near homonyms and therefore potentially confused. In Mixtec however the calendrical numbers for 1 and 8 are <câ> and <na> respectively, thus no confusion could have occurred. As we have seen in the colonial period indigenous language documentation, regardless of the language in which one was writing, the calendrical names of individuals were frequently not translated between Mixtec and Chocholtec. If this were the case in the early sixteenth century too, it might suggest that alternations between 1 and 8 might not necessarily reveal the author or intended audience of the document as Chocholtec speakers, but rather that the represented individual's name was usually said in Chocholtec

Table 4: The sixteenth and seventeenth-century barrios of
Tamazulapan and its 'sujeto' Teotongo[*]

Tamazulapan	Teotongo
Chiyo	Ca/andaxu
Miniqui	Cundadaçi
Nduhua	Ndahui
Nduvuadzuma	Ndutuhi
Ñuhuico	Nguindandee
Ñundee	Ninguda
Ñundecu	Sandathu
Tisica	Thuncheçine
Tiyahua	Thundu
Tnundoco	Tzaga
Yayanino	Tzetuchhuu
Ytandique	Tzunchida
Ytnunama	
Yuhuitandiqui	

[*] See Terraciano (2001: 113) for the Tamazulapan siqui and Doesburg and Swanton (in review; in preparation) regarding the Teotongo sindi. Two of the Mixtec *siqui* may actually be variants of each other. *Yuhuitandiqui* ("at the edge of *Itandiqui*") probably only provided a more precise location within *Ytandique*. Likewise, *Nduhuadzuma* ("Ravine Behind") may be a variant of *Nduhua* ("ravine"). Such specification is common in texts. For example in a Mixtec language investigation of a death in 1602, a man from Tamazulapan was said to be from *"siqui nduhua tnundoco"* ("the siqui of the Ravine of the Zapote Trees"), clearly a variant of *Tnundoco* (AHPJ, Ramo Tepozcolula, Penal, Legajo 6, exp. 24). If *Yuhuitandiqui* and *Nduhuadzuma* are variants of *Ytandique* and *Nduhua* respectively, this would have the interesting result that Tamazulapan would have the same number of barrios as Teotongo

The Chocholtec presence in the Valleys of Coixtlahuaca and Teotongo-Tamazulapan is well attested till today. The predominance of Chocholtec is reflected in the number of indigenous language texts from the region. While hundreds of pages of text written in Chocholtec during Spanish colonial rule are known, only a handful of Mixtec-language texts have survived. Excepting the occasional toponym appearing in Spanish language texts, traces of Mixtec in this region disappear by the end of the seventeenth century. Based on this review of the Mixtec-language texts from the region, a few hypotheses can be advanced regarding the sociolinguistic situation during the first two centuries of the colony.

Coixtlahuaca was known to have included a Mixtec component, called a *barrio* in Spanish language documentation. As late as 1717 appears a reference to '*el barrio misteco*' of Coixtlahuaca with its '*casa y solar del barrio*'.[20] A document conserved in the municipal archive of Santa María Nativitas also refers to a Mixtec *barrio* of Coixtla-

whether speaking in Chocholtec or Mixtec.

[20] '…*el solar que esta en el Barrio misteco arriva que esta detras de la casa y solar del Barrio*…' AHJO, Ramo Tepozcolula, Civil, Legajo 14, exp. 28.

huaca. In this text, written around 1700, Don Juan de Vera y Zúñiga, the identically named nephew of the aforementioned cacique of Santa María Nativitas, refers to the *tepad* (*tecpan*) of *yestepeque* (*Yeztepec*)*,* known as *Tineñe* in Mixtec, which had been in the possession of his grandmother Doña María Baptista y Zúñiga, the aforementioned cacica of Coixtlahuaca:

> …*y despues de mis bisaguelo y aguelo que es don thomas de vera que casso con vna cacica de esta cauesera de la tepad de tiñeñe llamado yestepeque en que poseyo y biuio en la dicha tepad en pas sin contradision ninguna y gosso los aprovechamientos de ella y fue gobernador y alcalde y su muxer del dicho mi aguelo fue casica de la tepad de tiñeñe que es vn barrio segundo de los mistecos y se llamo doña maria bauptista y suñiga en que vbo mi tio don juan de vera y suñiga y mi padre don diego de vera y suñiga cacique del pueblo de santa maria natiuitas y de esta cauesera* (Doesburg 2001:45-46 and 2002:10).

Yetztepec means 'Blood Mountain' in Nahuatl, similar in meaning to *Tineñe* in Mixtec. This document explicitly equates the *tecpan* of this 'Blood Hill' place with a Mixtec *barrio* of Coixtlahuaca. As has been pointed out by Doesburg, a 'Blood Hill' appears depicted in the *Lienzo de Coixtlahuaca II* as a component of the Coixtlahuaca polity with its own dynasty. Perhaps then this lineage maintained some sort of Mixtec identity.[21] Some colonial sources qualify other settlements or wards in the Coixtlahuaca Valley as being '*de los mixtecos*'. For example, the first book of marriage registers of the parochial archive of Coixtlahuaca dates to the second half of the seventeenth century and qualifies both Santa María Nativitas and Santa Catarina Ocotlán as '*de los mistecos*' (Doesburg 2001: 46 and 2002:4).

The presence of both Chocholtec and Mixtec speakers in this region is affirmed for Tejupan as well. The 1579 *Relación geográfica* of this pueblo indicates: '*En este pueblo hablan dos lenguas los indios:* mixteca *y* chochona*. La más general es la* mixteca…' (Acuña 1984, II:220). Tejupan was then one of Los Reyes' communities where there were '*mas los mixtecas que los Chuchones*'. Today there are still a handful of elders who speak Mixtec in Tejupan. Although few indigenous language documents from Tejupan are known, there are various indirect attestations as to the multilingualism of the pueblo. For example, in a 1586 *proceso* for idolatry against the cacique of Tequixtepec, Don Diego de San Miguel, appears Don Pablo de Sandoval, a translator of '*lengua misteca e chochona*' who was from Tejupan. Earlier in a land dispute of 1571, Jusepe de Sandoval, also from Tejupan, could translate Nahuatl, Mixtec and Chocholtec.[22] We might speculate that some of the Chocholtec speakers of Tejupan may have been located in the northern portion of the community near the border of Tulancingo. A *sindi* of this

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[21] 'Blood Mountain' is depicted as 'Jaguartail Rock' in the *Lienzo de Tlapiltepec*, which may be related to the *Peña de León* in Coixtlahuaca (Doesburg and Buren 1997: 123). The pictographic sources indicate that the lineage of this *barrio* traces its origins back to the lords of Miltepec.

[22] '*…don Pablo de Sandoval yndio prençipal y natural del pueblo de Texupa el qual abla y entiende la lengua misteca e chochona…*' (Doesburg 2002: 244, 249). For Jusepe de Sandoval, see AGI, Escribanía, 160B, f. 776.

latter community, called Tzasihi, was situated in a narrow valley bordering the lands of Tejupan. As mentioned above Domingo García Chicuiña, a resident of Tzasihi, gave his confession in Tejupan.[23] Interestingly, in the early sixteenth-century document known as the *Suma de Visitas*, one of the six barrios of Tejupan is *Capultongo*, the meaning of which in Nahuatl ('At the Small Capulin') is similar to the Chocholtec one of Tzasihi ('Capulin Ravine') (Paso y Troncoso, 1905:249).

Unfortunately the whereabouts of the *Relación geográfica* of Tamazulapan, like that of Coixtlahuaca, is currently unknown. However, the Tamazulapan region is home to the most extensive indigenous language record of the *tocuij ñudzavui*. This documentation forms two conspicuous groups: whereas the Mixtec language documentation concerns Tamazulapan (*Tiquehui* in Mixtec), the Chocholtec language documentation deals with Teotongo (*Tiñuhu* in Mixtec and *Thusagû* in Chocholtec), a 'sujeto' of Tamazulapan. Both of these pueblos contained their respective constituent parts, called 'barrios' in the Spanish documentation. Terraciano has identified fourteen barrios (called *siqui* in Mixtec) of Tamazulapan; twelve barrios (called *sindi* in Chocholtec) are known for Teotongo (see Table 4). Not surprisingly, the Tamazulapan *siqui* have Mixtec names, while the Teotongo *sindi* have Chocholtec ones.

Obviously numerous occasions must have arisen when Mixtec-speakers would mention localities in Teotongo and Chocholtec-speakers would talk of Tamazulapan places. A few examples of this are known from the indigenous language sources from the region. Don Andrés de Zárate, the cacique of the Teotongo *sindi* Sandathu and Ca/andaxu, presents himself as a Mixtec-speaker in the surviving documentation: in 1599 he wrote the accounts of Ca/andaxu in Mixtec, in 1602 he took part in writing up the Mixtec-language criminal investigation of a Tamazulapan man who died in a temazcal after a snake bite, and when his own death appeared to be approaching, Don Andrés had his testament written in Mixtec in 1607.[24] In both his 1599 accounts and in his testament, the local cacique refers to Ca/andaxu ('Among the Reeds') by its Mixtec name *Nduhuayoo* ('Reed Ravine'). Interestingly in the account book entry, Nduhuayoo was not referred to as a *siqui*, like the Tamazulapan barrios, but a *siña,* suggesting a different form of social organization or settlement.[25] For their part, Chocholtec-speakers also had equivalents of local Mixtec places. The 1592 entry of the aforementioned account book of Ca/andaxu refers to the 'sheep that are in Nguindasiçe' ('Below the Zapote Tree'), presumably the Tamazulapan barrio Tnundoco ('Zapote Tree').[26] Still, as already mentioned, there

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[23] LT-Tul, 99. This testament was written by a Teotongo notary however.

[24] LC-Ca, 1599; AHJO, Ramo Tepozcolula, Penal, Legajo 6, exp. 24; LT-Teo, 6.

[25] Terraciano (2001: 105 ff.) has found the term *siña* appears frequently in Mixtec language documentation from the Yanhuitlan region. Although Don Andrés refers to Nduhuayoo as a *siña* in the 1599 accounts, the 1602 investigation into the death of the old man in the temazcal indicates that the deceased was from the *siqui* of Nduhua Tnundoco. See Doesburg and Swanton (in preparation) for a detailed description of the *siña-sindi* of Nduhuayoo-Ca/andaxu.

[26] '…*utuchu the nguidasiçe*…' (LC-Ca, 92: 11). Interestingly, the *Suma de Visitas* appears to give a Nahuatl equivalent to this Tamazulapan *siqui*, Çapotitlan ('Below the Zapote'), Paso y Troncoso (ed) 1905: 250.

also existed a tendency in the documentation to refer to pueblo-internal localities in the dominant language of the community.

In the case of Tamazulapan and its 'sujeto' Teotongo, the overall sociolinguistic situation documented in the texts appears straightforward. At the end of the sixteenth century, Teotongo, located to the north of Tamazulapan was predominantly Chocholtec-speaking, while in Tamazulapan Mixtec-speakers were almost certainly in the majority. This rather clear-cut state of affairs is reflected in the distribution of abundant indigenous language documents, made even more precise in the language used for person and place names appearing in those documents. Thus two pueblos of different languages, each with their own constituent parts, were part of an overarching polity. Such a situation superficially resembles the ethnically diverse, complex indigenous polities known from Central Mexico. These 'composite' polities of pre-colonial origins were constituted by separate, largely autonomous, ranked pueblos (often called *parcialidades* or *partes* in Spanish). As shown in the case of Cuauhtinchan, this arrangement could accommodate pueblos of very distinct ethnicities.[27] Nevertheless, despite the apparent similarities with this Central Mexican form of organization, we should recall that the socio-political and socio-linguistic situations of Tamazulapan and Teotongo outlined above, characterize the late sixteenth century. Thus, the two pueblos had already undergone the *congregaciones* projects and, perhaps more dramatically, the resettlement of Tamazulapan following its brutal administration by its *encomendero*, Francisco de Solís, in the 1530s.[28] We know almost nothing of the pre-colonial situation, beyond the dispersed settlement patterns identified in archaeological reconnaissance (Byland, 1984, 1988). Neither Tamazulapan nor Teotongo have been identified in the Mixtec codices and early sixteenth-century references to Teotongo are lacking. Thus it remains only conjecture to qualify Teotongo and Tamazulapan as Chocholtec and Mixtec *parcialidades* of a larger composite pre-colonial polity.

The few examples of Mixtec language texts in Teotongo do not point to extensive speech communities of this language, but rather multilingual families. The Mixtec-speaking Don Andrés de Zárate lived with his Chocholtec-speaking wife María de Zárate in the *sindi* of Sandathu. Between 1606 and 1638, approximately thirty other testaments and *memorias* were written for residents of Sandathu, all in Chocholtec. Don Andrés' cacicazgo included a lordly residence in Ca/andaxu. There too Chocholtec was clearly the dominant language. In his Mixtec-language testament, Don Andrés acknowledges that he acquired his patrimony there from the late Domingo Ndatermhi, whose Chocholtec calendrical name suggests that he was a speaker of this language.[29] Since

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[27] See Lockhart (1992: 20-28) regarding the Central Mexican composite polity. See Reyes García (1988) for a description analysis of Cuauhtinchan socio-political organization.

[28] Regarding Solís' '*muchos malos tratamientos*' see Doesburg 2002.

[29] '*ytu aniñe nduhuayoo usi yoho ytu sayondaa testamento niquidza ñud[omin]go ndatermhi nandaaca ytu ñaninacahandi…*' ('The field in the lordly residence in Ca/andaxu is of ten ropes [in size]. It is the

patrimony generally stayed in the family, the late Domingo was probably related to Don Andrés, perhaps as an in-law. All of the nineteen identified testaments from Ca/andaxu, dating from 1607 to 1634, are written entirely in Chocholtec. Another case, mentioned above, is that of Don Matías de Mendoza, a resident of the Teotongo *sindi* of Ndutuhi. Of the thirty-two known testaments from this *sindi*, only Don Matías' includes Mixtec text. Perhaps it is revealing then that he names, in his Chocholtec-language text, his mother with a Mixtec calendrical name. It is again family connections that seem to be at play in the Mixtec-language documentation from the Coixtlahuaca Valley. The calendrical names of the rulers and the place names of boundaries in the *Lienzo de Nativitas* are glossed in Mixtec. This community was also called 'Santa María de los Mixtecos' during the colony. Nevertheless, Nativitas today is one of the last Chocholtec-speaking pueblos in the region. What happened? A possible explanation concerns the nature of the documentation itself. The *Lienzo de Nativitas* was not produced as a document of the pueblo, but rather of the señorío. If the cacique house were Mixtec-speaking, it would not be surprising that they would have their *lienzo* glossed in this language. Historical references referring to Santa María de los Mixtecos might then have had more to do with the identity of the ruling house, than the linguistic practices of the pueblo's inhabitants.

Thus at least two social arrangements seem to be behind the Chocholtec-Mixtec multilingualism of the region attested in the indigenous language texts. Settlements, either *saçê* (pueblos, called parcialidades or partes) or *sindi* (barrios), of different languages could be brought together within a composite polity. This was the case of the *saçê* of Teotongo, called a 'sujeto' of Tamazulapan in the Spanish-language documentation. Another arrangement emerged as families reached across linguistic boundaries. This was the case of the Mixtec-speaking Don Andrés de Zárate, who married the Chocholtec-speaking Doña María, and perhaps Don Matías de Mendoza's father who married María Ñumahu. Similar arrangements reach back well before the arrival of the Spanish to the region.[30] The example of Don Andes de Zárate shows how through family a Mixtec-speaker could become a cacique of a predominantly Chocholtec-speaking *sindi*. Perhaps a similar situation had existed in Nativitas. In these latter cases, the maintenance of Mixtec in these predominately Chocholtec-speaking communities suggests that this language must have enjoyed a certain prestige in the region, a prestige which was replaced by Spanish by the eighteenth century.

field which is written in the testament that the late Domingo Ndatermhi made. Where the field is, I don't remember...'). LT-Teo, 6.

[30] See Jansen (1989: 79-81), Jansen et al (1998) and Oudijk (2000: 100-36) for evidence of pre-colonial marriages that reached across linguistic boundaries.

Table 5: Known Nahuatl Writings of the Chocholtec-speaking region[*]

1550-64	Libro de Cuenta de Santa Catarina Tejupan ("Codex Sierra") [Biblioteca José María Lafragua].[**]
1551	Land transfer, Aztatla, Coixtlahuaca 1551 [AHJO, Ramo Tepozcolula, Civil, Legajo 21, exp. 10] transcribed and translated in Terraciano (1994: 624)
circa 1568	Receipt for two colts sold to Don Miguel de San Francisco, cacique of Tequixtepec, ("Codex Lucas Alemán"); transcribed and translated in Doesburg (in press).
1570	Mandamiento, [AAT-41]; transcribed and translated in Doesburg (2002: 193-94).
circa 1576	Note about tasación, [AAT-20]; transcribed and translated in Doesburg (2002: 201).
1583	Provisión Real ordering the alcalde mayor of Yanhuitlán to investigate a conflict between San Cristobal Suchixtlahuaca and Tequixtepec over lands in Zacualtongo. [AAT-68].[***]
1587	Letter from Domingo and Catarina García to Don Diego de San Miguel, cacique of Tequixtepec [AAT-42]; transcribed and translated in Doesburg (2002: 293-300).
1597	Testament of Don Francisco de Mendoza, cacique of Coixtlahuaca, [BNAH, Colección Antigua 797, ff. 122-124v].
1601	Letter from Don Pedro de San Pablo y Francisco Velázquez of Tequixtepec to Francisco de las Casa in Teposcolula regarding the theft of a horse, [AHJO, Ramo Tepozcolula, Penal, Legajo 5, exp. 46].
1663	Testament of Don Francisco de Mendoza, [BNAH, Colección Antigua 797, ff. 150-151v].

[*] Not included are the numerous Nahuatl-language documents produced in or near the various Popoloca-speaking communities of what is now southern Puebla or the short Nahuatl summaries written on the verso, foot or head of eight documents in the AAT to aid in their identification: AAT-18 (1553), 30 (1559), 21 (1561), 47 (1565), 20 (1574), 19 (1575), 44 (1580), 6 (1583), transcribed in Doesburg (2002: 134, 176, 183, 188, 201, 203, 218, 237). AAT-30 is a rare example of a bilingual Nahuatl-Chocholtec text, stating: "*caayato xoo cepovali chicome amat(l)*", '27 papers, 27 papers'. Also not included are the Nahuatl glosses appearing on the *Lienzo de Coixtlahuaca II* and the *Lienzo de Tequixtepec I*, which are analyzed in König (1984) and Reyes García (1998) respectively.

[**] From the community of Santa Catarina Tejupan, this account book covering the years 1550-1564 contains both a pictorial register and an alphabetic Nahuatl one. The 61-page document is presumably missing folios at the beginning and between pages 16 and 17. All complete publications of this well-known text are based on the calque appearing in León (1906). As explained by León: "*El año 1905 hice que por mi cuenta lo calcara un dibujante de Puebla. . .*" (1933, 6). Only the 1933 edition, and its subsequent re-editions, include a (defective) translation of the Nahuatl, made by Mariano J. Rojas. See Doesburg and Swanton (in preparation) and citations within for an analysis of this interesting text.

[***] I thank Bas van Doesburg for having brought this text to my attention.

Nahuatl in the Valleys of Coixtlahuaca and Tamazulapan-Teotongol

In an often cited affirmation, Fr. Toribio Benavente Motolinia compares Nahuatl with Latin: '*Y entre todas las lenguas de la Nueua España, la de los* nahuhales [sic pro: nahuas] *o de* nahutl [sic pro: nahuatl] *es como latin para entender las otras*' (Benavente Motolinia, 1996:330).[31] This affirmation should be understood within the specific context of the earliest European efforts of evangelization. Confronted with the linguistic diversity of New Spain, the friars saw in Nahuatl a way to make inroads in the instruction of the basic tenets of Christianity to the indigenous populations. In the sixteenth century, Nahuatl was widely spoken in central Mexico and used as a vehicular language in many parts of Mesoamerica. It was also a language of prestige, having been spoken in pre-colonial Tenochtitlan and considered the linguistic inheritance of the fabled, civilized Toltecs.[32] It was not surprising then that Nahuatl was the first indigenous language to which the friars directed their efforts. The use of Nahuatl as a vehicular language was also adopted, perhaps grudgingly, by the colonial civil administration, which, for example, made use of Nahuatl translators in the *Audiencia Real*. Within three decades of the Spanish conquest of Tenochtitlan, the Franciscans had already produced a written Nahuatl grammar and by 1555 the first edition of Fr. Alonso de Molina's Nahuatl *Vocabulario* was printed. These constitute the first grammar and dictionary of any indigenous language of the Americas. Yet, the friars sought to do more than just learn Nahuatl; they aimed at literacy among native speakers of this language. Perhaps as early as 1539 the Franciscans had printed a Christian Doctrine in Nahuatl and other religious texts were soon to follow. The writing and reading of Nahuatl was rapidly adopted among indigenous peoples of New Spain and its use spread far beyond the initial evangelical goals of the friars.[33]

The situation of Nahuatl in the area today called Oaxaca differed significantly from that of the Mexican Central Valleys. Here the use of Nahuatl as a first language was rather limited. Nahuatl was spoken—and in some cases is spoken— around Tuxtepec and in parts of the northern Sierra Mazateca adjoining what is now the state of Puebla (Cuamatzi Cortés 1999). Nahuatl-speaking colonies also existed in a handful of other locations, most notably in Huaxyacac, today known as Oaxaca City (Chance 1978).[34]

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[31] This is echoed by Mendieta: '*Mas en todas partes hay intérpretes que entienden y hablan la mexicana, porque esta es la que por todas partes corre, como la latina por todos los reinos de Europa,*' (1993: 552).

[32] In the *Florentine Codex* we read that the Toltecs 'were Nahua; they did not speak a barbarous tongue [popoloca]' and that 'all the Nahua, those who speak clearly [Nahuatl], not the speakers of a barbarous tongue [popoloca], are the descendants of the Tolteca' ('*ca naoa, ca amo popolocaia…in yxqujchtin naoatlaca: in naoatlatoa, in amo popoloca: ca innecauhcaiooan in tulteca*') FC, Book 10, Chptr. 29 'Tolteca' (170).

[33] See Lockhart (1992) for some of the various expressions that this colonial Nahuatl literacy took.

[34] More recently Nahuatl was established in communities of the so called "pastores" in the Mixteca Baja near Putla and Huajuapan (Dehouve, Cervantes Delgado and Hvilshøj, 2004).

On the coast around Pochutla, a highly divergent Nahuatl variant was spoken, Pochuteco, which died out in the beginning of the twentieth century.[35] Outside of these few communities, a multitude of other indigenous languages were spoken and only occasionally was Nahuatl available as a second language.

The linguistic Babel of Oaxaca proved to be a challenge for both religious and civil administration in this region. By 1570 the Cathedral of Antequera (now Oaxaca City) had proposed that Nahuatl be learned by the indigenous peoples of the province in order to facilitate their religious instruction (Velasco Ceballos 1945: 6-7). Such fanciful plans were clearly unrealistic but did reflect a real frustration in communication. The vehicular status of Nahuatl was adequate to establish the basic foundation of Spanish civil and religious authority in the initial days of the conquest and subsequent colonization. In this early period, communication rested on a small group of indigenous intermediaries, fluent in Nahuatl and one or more other indigenous languages. But by the mid-sixteenth century, the friars recognized that to make their messages understood, they needed more direct contact. With their background in humanistic philology and scholastic language training, the Dominicans took the lead in the study of the languages of Oaxaca, so helping to assure their exclusivity in this region regarding spiritual matters.

In the Mixteca, indigenous language literacy reflected this colonial politics of language. As Terraciano has already observed, Nahuatl literacy in the Mixteca existed, but was largely limited to the first century of colonization (Terraciano 2001: 45-48).[36] Once Mixtec-language writing emerged under the auspices of the major Dominican convents of the region, writing in Nahuatl largely ceased. The situation in the *Tocuij Ñudzavui* was slightly more complicated and written Nahuatl did not disappear with the development of Mixtec or Chocholtec writing (Table 5). This would suggest that instead of a sequence of literacy in the region – in which Nahuatl writing gave way to Mixtec which in turn was replaced by Chocholtec – it may be more productive to think in terms of intended audiences, social prestige and language skills. In the seventeenth century, Nahuatl was still the most commonly used indigenous language of Spanish colonial administration and it may have been understood to be more accessible, and less prone to misunderstanding, than writing in Chocholtec or even Mixtec. Its use in the colonial administration may have only reinforced the language's former prestige. It is probably not a coincidence that the last known Nahuatl text from the Coixtlahuaca region is a testament of a cacique (1663); it may have been expected that a testament in Nahuatl would be more valuable in assuring the correct transmission of his patrimony.

The continued importance of Nahuatl throughout the sixteenth century as a vehicular language of the colonial administration in the region can been seen in legal proceedings in which translators are often explicitly qualified as knowing multiple indigenous

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[35] On Pochutec see Boas (1917) and Dakin (1983) and the references therein.

[36] This should be qualified to refer to the Mixteca Alta and Baja. There is no known, extended Mixtec text from the Costa.

languages, among which Nahuatl. In 1568 Martín Velázquez appears as a translator in a *posesión* of Zacualtongo and is described as a '*yndio q[ue] habla la lengua mexicana y chochona y misteca*'. Velázquez, presumably from Tequixtepec or some nearby community, also wrote the so-called 'Codex Lucas Alamán', a Nahuatl-language receipt for two colts sold to the gobernador of Tequixtepec.[37] In 1585 Don Diego del Castillo appears as a translator in the idolatry proceedings against Don Diego de San Miguel, gobernador of Tequixtepec. He is characterized as: '*yndio prençipal y natural de la estançia de Sanctiago suxeta al pueblo de Cuestlavaca que habla y entiende las lenguas chochona e misteca e mexicana*'. Don Diego appears again as a legal translator in 1592.[38] In 1596, Domingo Esteban served as a translator in the legal proceedings against Francisco Jiménez by the residents of San Jerónimo, Coixtlahuaca for excessive levies. Domingo too was multilingual, speaking Chocholtec, Mixtec, Nahuatl and Spanish.[39] In Spanish-language texts from this period, Nahuatl frequently functioned to represent indigenous names of persons and places. Thus in the Spanish language documentation concerning the abovementioned *posesión* of 1568 in which Martín Velázquez appeared as a translator, the calendrical names of witnesses were given in Nahuatl. A 1582 *posesión* of Tequixtepec written in Spanish gives the names of local lands in Chocholtec, but the names of the barrios appear in Nahuatl.[40]

Nahuatl also retained an importance among Dominican friars residing in what is now the northwestern portion of the state of Oaxaca, even after the emergence of Mixtec and Chocholtec literacy. In a 1603 register of the Dominicans in Teposcolula, over one-third are noted as speakers of Nahuatl (*lengua mexicana*), and some were said to speak two or three '*lenguas de indios*', one of which was quite probably Nahuatl (Bazan 1964: 472-74).[41] The Mixtec vocabulary printed by the Dominicans in 1593 contains various entries in the Spanish side including Nahuatl words. Some of these clearly represent early loanwords into Spanish, generally nouns like atole, çapote, comal, çoyacal, metate, maçegual, milpas, petates, piciete, tameme, tamal, temascalt [sic], tequio, tianguez, etc.[42] However, other entries made use of Nahuatl words, which perhaps were less assimilated into the Spanish lexicon of the friars. These entries first describe the object in Spanish and say 'that they call…' ('*que llaman*') providing the Nahuatl term:

> *camissa que vsan las yndias que llaman huipil*
> *ebano. arbol que llaman tlacuilolt quavuitl*
> *erizo que llaman chayote*

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[37] Doesburg 2006 and 2002: 191 transcribes AGN, Tierras, 3703, exp. 3.

[38] AAT-23 and 53, transcribed in Doesburg 2002, see especially pp.257 and 315-16.

[39] AHJO, Ramo Teposcolula, Penal, Legajo 4, exp. 10, f. 1v.

[40] AAT-51/52, transcribed in Doesburg 2002: 227-34.

[41] It may be that some of these entries are in error. For example, the register affirms that Antonio de los Reyes was '*muy buena lengua mejicana*', but does not mention his well known knowledge of Mixtec at all. See also Terraciano (2001: 68) for a similar example of Nahuatl speaking friars from 1703.

[42] Similarly, the Mixtec vocabulary also includes various indigenous words on the Spanish side that had already been adopted from the Caribbean, e.g., axi, batata, bate, buhiyo, canoa, huracan, maguei, maiz, mamey, naguas, yguana, etc.

Table 6: Perfect Formation in the Nahuatl translation of the 1583 Provisión Real (The numbers in brackets refer to the number of tokens)

Verb Stem	1583 Provisión	Classical Nahuatl	translation
āna	ocanaq (2)	ōcānqueh	they took it
calaqui	calaquic	calac	s/he entered
	ocalaquique	ōcalacqueh	they entered
caqui	oticaquic	ōticcac	you heard/understood
chīhua	omochihuac (3)	ōmochīuh	it was made/done
	onicchihuac	ōnicchīuh	I made/did it
	oquichihuaq	ōquichīuhqueh	they made/did it
ēlimiqui	quielimiquique	quēlimicqueh	they cultivated it
pēhua	opehuaq	ōpēuhqueh	they began
tlancuāquetza	omotlanquaqtzaq	ōmotlancuāquetzqueh	they knelt

Table 7: Epenthetic <i> in the Nahuatl translation of the 1583 Provisión Real

1583 Provisión	Classical Nahuatl	translation
altepetli	āltepētl	pueblo
amatli	āmatl	paper, document
tlacatli	tlācatl	person
nehuatli	nehhuātl	1st person emphatic pronoun
tehuatli	tehhuātl	2nd person emphatic pronoun
yehuatli	yehhuātl	3rd person emphatic pronoun
toamahui	tāmauh	our paper, document
motequihui	motequiuh	his/her work (cargo)
totlatocahui	totlahtohcāuh	our lord
timitzinahuatia	timitznahuatiah	we notify you
otechimotlali	ōtēchmotlālih	it was put on us
otechimotlatlanili	ōtēchmotlahtlanilih	they asked us (hon.)
ahui	auh	and
iquaxochi	īcuāxōch	his/her boundary
ytechi	ītech	to it/him/her
tonatihui	tōnatiuh	sun

Table 8: Perfect Formation in the 1587 Nahuatl-language letter

Verb Stem	1587 Letter	Classical Nahuatl	translation
chīhua	onicchihua	ōnicchīuh	I did/made it
	oquichiua	ōquichīuh	s/he did/made it
	omochiua	ōmochīuh	it was done
tlami	otlami	ōtlan	it finished
caqui	oticaqui	ōticcacqueh	we heard/understood it
yahui*	oyahui	ōyah	s/he went

* Regarding this stem, see Canger (in review).

escudilla que llaman molcaxetl
goma negra que maxcan las Indias que llaman chapopotle[43]

The Los Reyes grammar of Mixtec, printed also in 1593, likewise assumes some knowledge of Nahuatl. Various early loanwords from Nahuatl appear in the text, such as cacao, chicuvite, comal, mazahuales, mecates, milpa, patle, tequio and tianguez (Los Reyes, 1593)[44]. More interesting however are the grammatical comparisons the Dominican made. In the second chapter of this work, Los Reyes points out that Mixtec does not possess such 'elegant' morphemes as the Nahuatl delocative suffix *-tēca* and 'abstractive' suffix *-yō*. He takes it for granted that the reader of his grammar would possess knowledge of these derived Nahuatl nouns.

> *Fuera de los nombres arriba puestos se podian poner otros que llaman possesiuos, los quales no se hallan en esta Mixteca. Aunque si en la mexicana, y muy elegantes, como mexicatl, tlaxcaltecatl, tepuzcultecatl, yancuitecatl. hombre de Mexico, Tlaxcala, Tepuzculula, Yanguitlan. Y esta composicion no la ay en la Mixteca, sino, tai ñucoyo, tay nudzita, tay yucundaa, tay yodzocahi, que no son possessiuos.*
> *Tambien dizen Mexicaiutl, tenuchcaiutl, teuiutl, altepeiutl. cosa de Mexico, cosa de Dios, o que pertenece a Dios, o al pueblo. laqual composicion no la hay en la Mixteca, sino de diferente manera, como sayotnaha siñucoyo, sistohon Dios, siyuvitayu. l. sayehe tnaha siñucoyo, &c. Lo qual se entiende bien, dado que no tenga este modo tan elegante como en lo Mexicano (Los Reyes, 1593: 9-9v; 11-12).*

Unlike the Mixtec-language texts from the Coixtlahuaca-Tamazulapan region, which transparently fall into two dialect sets, linguistic variation across Nahuatl-language sources from the region defy any obvious geographical grouping. These Nahuatl sources retain the pre-proto-Aztec /λ/, graphically represented as <tl>. This retention is shared by a broad swath of dialects reaching from Colima and Guerrero through central Mexico, much of Puebla and the dialect area called the Huasteca. Likewise the sources from the Chocholtec region demonstrate the use of the remote past proclitic (ō=), characteristic of dialects west of the state of Veracruz and adjoining regions. Yet, in the formation of the perfect, the Nahuatl texts of the Chocholtec region show seemingly irregular linguistic variation. As demonstrated by Canger, an innovative rule of stem-final vowel loss separates a Central dialect area – comprising the Valley of Mexico, Tlaxcala, Morelos, Central Guerrero, Central Puebla, Northern Puebla and the Huasteca dialect area – from the other, 'peripheral' Nahuatl dialect areas (Canger 1980, 1988). Generally verbs belonging to the class that undergoes this vowel loss end in the shape VCa or VCi and are usually underived.[45]

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43 Alvarado 1962 [1593]: 42v, 84v, 100, 102v, 116.
44 (Los Reyes, 1593: 37 (46); 17, 45 (21, 56); 44 (55); 11, 36v (14, 46); 41v (52); 13, 21v (16, 27); 43v, 44 (55); Prologo, 1, 24, 24v, 42 (iv, 1, 30, 31, 53); 15, 52 (19, 66).
45 Regarding the formation of the perfect in Nahuatl, see Canger 1980: 46-99; Launey 1986: 376-81.

This central dialect area rule is illustrated in the 1551 land transfer: *'ca vtomonotzque tomexti[n] y[n] p[edr]o molina yn ipa[m]pa mili aztatla'* Translated: 'We both went to speak to each other, Pedro Molina and I, about the fields in Aztatlan.' In this example the transitive verb stem *nōtza* (i.e. /no:ca/) loses its final vowel. On this verb base – *nōtz* (i.e. /no:c/) – the perfect is formed with the 'participial' and plural suffixes.[46] It also takes the remote past proclitic.

The translation of the 1583 *Provisión Real* from Tequixtepec reveals a different strategy for the formation of the perfect: verbs ending in the shape VCa or VCi never lose their stem-final vowel in the perfect, though they do take the participial suffix. Such verbs appearing in the text are given in Table 6 where they are compared with the corresponding 'classical Nahuatl' forms, a central dialect.

The formation of the perfect in this text therefore would be classified as that of a 'peripheral dialect'. Another outstanding feature of this text is a curious epenthetic <i> that appears following syllable-final affricates (/c, č, λ/) or the semi-consonant /w/ before another consonant or word-finally. In the absence of any historical or morphological explanation that could account for all of the examples below, this phenomenon is taken to be purely phonological. Examples of this phenomenon are shown in Table 7 where they are compared with the corresponding forms in classical Nahuatl.

The 1587 letter from Domingo and Catarina García manifests yet another approach to perfect formation.[47] Like the 1583 *Provisión Real*, several verbs in this text do not lose the stem-final vowel in the perfect. However, they also do not take the participial suffix (Table 8).

This process is also attested in the 'Lucas Alamán' receipt for two colts sold to Don Miguel de San Francisco, cacique of Tequixtepec, around 1568. In the short Nahuatl text of this document appear two tokens of the verb <oquiça>, 'it came out'. This word again illustrates a perfect without either the loss of the stem-final vowel or the suffixation of the participial. Thus, within a rather compact region during a period of only a few decades, three different processes for perfect formation are attested, namely, for the set of verbs under consideration: (1) stem modification with suffixation, (2) suffixation without stem modification and (3) no cstem modification or suffixation.

The philological control of the documents' proveniences is lacking. There is no evidence that the author of the 1551 land transfer was from the Coixtlahuaca-Tamazulapan region. Terraciano has suggested that Nahuas from other regions may have served as in-

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[46] The term 'participial' for this suffix, adopted here, was proposed by Launey (1977, 1986:565 ff.).

[47] This 1587 letter also makes use of a curious construction in which the remote past proclitic appears on a verb with the 'future' formative. This same construction appears in at least two other texts from the Mixteca, the *Libro de Cuenta de Santa Catarina Tejupan* and the *Pintura de Tilantongo* (Oudijk and Doesburg, in press). Una Canger has pointed out to me that Campbell (1988) has found this same construction in Nahuatl texts from Chiapas. On casual inspection, the environment of these examples suggests a perfect aspect, but posterior to preceding, perfect action(s).

termediaries in the Mixteca during the early years of the colony. This may have been the case here, as there is little in the language to distinguish this text from others produced at this time in central Mexico. The Nahuatl translation of the 1583 *Provisión real* is located in the Tequixtepec municipal archive and probably was part of the family archive of the community's caciques. Still, there is no certainty that the translation was made by someone from this community. The 1587 personal letter and the horse receipt are better grounded in the region. Written to the cacique of Tequixtepec by his brother-in-law, there is little reason to suppose that the text does not approximate local language knowledge. As mentioned above, the notary that penned the horse receipt, Martín Velázquez, was a known trilingual translator from the region.

From the cursory review of the region's Nahuatl documentation above, two facts stand out. Firstly, there was no regional standard of Nahuatl in the documentation and linguistic variation across Nahuatl-language sources from the region do not enter into any obvious geographical grouping. This points to the absence of a significant speech community of Nahuatl-language speakers in the Tamazulapan-Coixtlahuaca region.[48] Secondly, the documentation reveals certain idiosyncrasies that suggest Nahuatl was not a common first language or mother tongue in the region. The appearance of the epenthetic <i>, before another consonant or word-finally when following syllable-final affricates (/c, č, λ/) or the semi-consonant /w/, might be explained as an instance of language interference. Chocholtec, Mixtec and other Otomanguean languages avoid closed syllables. Perhaps then the translator of the 1583 *Provisión real* was a second-language speaker of Nahuatl whose mother tongue was such an Otomanguean language. More suggestive is the perfect formation attested in the 1587 personal letter and the receipt for the sale of two colts, both from Tequixtepec. In these texts, the realization of the perfect involves neither the loss of the stem-final vowel nor the suffixation of the participial. This can only be explained historically by positing the complete loss, without a trace, of the proto-Aztecan suffix *-ka, resulting in the remote past proclitic being the sole marker of tense-aspect information. Such a phenomenon is known from other Nahuatl texts, but, to our knowledge, always from regions where there were no significant Nahuatl-speaking communities, such as in the Kaqchikel-speaking region of Guatemala (Lutz and Dakin 1996). The formation of the perfect in central dialects of Nahuatl is complicated, and the absence of any marking for this aspect (so relying strictly on the tense indicated by the remote past proclitic) may be best explained as a functional simplification of second language Nahuatl speakers. Though more investigation into the Nahuatl-language texts produced in this region and others where there were no significant Nahuatl speech communities is necessary, at present the historical and philological

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[48] This point is also suggested by the sixteenth-century *Relación geográfica* of Ixcatlán, which states: 'Es la lengua destos, en toda la provincia, *chochona*, y hablan muy pocos la general *mexicana*', Acuña 1984, I: 229.

data suggest that Nahuatl in the Coixtlahuaca-Tamazulapan region may have been used as a simplified vehicular language by local inhabitants in their communication with other speech communities.[49]

The extant Nahuatl-language texts from the Coixtlahuaca-Tamazulapan region were written for or by local indigenous elites and provide little evidence for a wide-spread use of Nahuatl. Rather the texts bespeak of the situation described in some of the sixteenth-century *Relaciones Geográficas,* which mention that among non-Nahuatl speaking communities, the 'gente principal' or 'gente noble' spoke Nahuatl.[50] Throughout much of the sixteenth century, Nahuatl served as a vehicular language in the Mixteca between the Spanish colonial administration and the indigenous communities. As Terraciano has illustrated, translation in the Mixteca during this early period relied on two interpreters: one, often Spanish, speaking Spanish and Nahuatl and another, often indigenous, fluent in Nahuatl and Mixtec or Chocholtec (Terraciano 2001: 45 et passim).[51] Knowledge of Nahuatl thus permitted a more direct communication with Spanish authorities, which could only reinforce its status as a prestige language. Still, it would be a mistake to consider the use of Nahuatl by the indigenous nobility of the region as a colonial phenomenon. Since the conquest of the region, carried out under Moteuczoma I, Coixtlahuaca had been the capital of the Aztec tributary province in the Mixteca (Berdan and Anawalt 1992). Presumably the periodic payments of tribute required the use of Nahuatl as a vehicular language. Likewise, almost all of the known Nahuatl-language documents of the region are from either Coixtlahuaca or Tequixtepec, both known for their important markets. Coixtlahuaca in particular was known to have drawn merchants from distant communities in Central Mexico as far back as the fifteenth century. The Dominican chronicler fr. Diego Durán affirms that the Coixtlahuaca market received merchants from as far away as Mexico, Texcoco, Chalco, Xochimilco, Coyoacan, Tacuba and Azcapotzalco. The goods traded at the market included such exotic materials as quetzal feathers, rubber and cacao brought from afar. At least in the case of Tequixtepec, the visiting merchants paid a fee of five 'cacaos gordos' for the privilege of selling in that community's market.[52] Again the administration of such large, interregional markets

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[49] This interpretation differs significantly from Dakin's argument that Guatemalan Nahuatl texts represent a linguistic ancestor to Classical Nahuatl that was transmitted within Kaqchikel communities over centuries with little linguistic interference (Lutz and Dakin 1996:168-69, 188-89).

[50] For example, the *Relación geográfica* of Ucila records: 'Y, en esta provi[nci]a, hay sola una lengua que se llama chinanteca, muy dificultosa para quien no la sabe; hay, entre la gente principal, alg[un]os dellos que saben la lengua mexicana,' (Acuña 1984, II: 270). That of Tepeaca notes: '...los pueblos de Tecamachalco y Quecholac, comúnmente hablan otra lengua tosca llamada popolucan, excepto que toda la gente noble hablan, poco o mucho, la mexicana,' (Acuña 1984-85, II:232).

[51] See also Doesburg 2002: 6.

[52] Durán 1967, II: 185. See also the *Anales de Cuautitlan*, (Bierhorst 1992:§189). Regarding the cacao payment of the Tequixtepec and other markets, see AAT-1, transcribed in Doesburg (2002:135-42).

was probably under the supervision of the indigenous nobility and presumably was conducted using Nahuatl as the primary vehicular language.

Though undoubtedly useful in the sixteenth century, knowledge of Nahuatl had to be acquired somehow, probably in the absence of any speech community of this language in the vicinity of Coixtlahuaca or Tamazulapan. An important means of Nahuatl acquisition must have been long distance commerce. In carrying out their commerce, such traders would travel as far away as Guatemala, sometimes for years at a time. In 1563 the alcalde mayor of Yanhuitlán complained:

> *algunos naturales del tienen por costunbre de yrse a la proui[nci]a de Guatemala y a otras partes lexanas donde estan tres o quatro años dexando a sus mugeres e hijos con mucha nesçesidad y que si no se les ynpidiese ni estoruase semejantes ydas uernia mucho daño en la rrepublica porque no se labrarian las tierras q[ue] los d[ic]hos yndios tienen ni se cobrarian los tributos* (AGN, Mercedes 6, f. 189v).[53]

Neither Chocholtec nor Mixtec would have been of much use in Guatemala and it is probably safe to assume that Nahuatl functioned as a vehicular language. Some indirect evidence attests to the use of Nahuatl among long-distance traders. For example, when Martín Cortés, a Mixtec principal and trader from Istepec, fell ill en route to Guatemala in 1594, he had his testament written in Nahuatl (Terraciano 2001: 244). Writing in the mid-seventeenth century, the Dominican chronicler, Francisco de Burgoa, comments that along the camino real to Guatemala in the Villa of Nexapa, Nahuatl was commonly spoken by traveling long-distance merchants:

> *…la Villa de Nexapa en cuyos Pueblos se administran dos lenguas en que se diuiden, la vna Mije, y la otra Zapoteca, y con la occasion de la vezindad estudiò* [Gaspar de los Reyes] *tan bien esta, y por el passage del camino Real de este Reyno para Guatemala casi ordinarias en la villa necessidad de Confessar Indios harrieros y viandantes, que para este tragino, y exercicio lo general es hablar la lengua Mexicana que es la comun del Reyno, y quiso el cuidadoso Padre por no faltar à estas necesidades estudiar tãbien esta lengua...* (Burgoa 1997 [1670]: 224v).

The extended voyages of the long-distance traders would have afforded ample language learning opportunities.[54] Finally, it is worth recalling that Terraciano's research

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[53] I thank Bas van Doesburg for having communicated this reference to me. Terraciano refers to this same text in his discussion of long-distance Mixtec traders (2000:244).

[54] The consolidation of Spanish control over long distance trade in the Mixteca during the second half of the seventeenth century may also have played a role in the abandonment of Nahuatl at this time. If long distance indigenous trade contributed to the Nahuatl-language knowledge revealed in texts known from the Sierra Mixe, this would suggest a longer vitality of this long distance trade in the Mixe highlands than in the Mixteca. As late as 1723, a Nahuatl writ was drawn up in Totontepec [AHJO, Villa Alta, Civil, Leg. 8, exp. 11, ff. 5-6] and in 1743, Catalina Ana of Tiltepec had her testament written in Nahuatl [AHJO, Villa Alta, Civil, Leg. 38, exp. 6, f. 2]. Nahuatl literacy in the Sierra Mixe probably stems from the absence of any

has shown interregional traders from the Mixteca appear to have generally been indigenous nobles or have resembled them in their wealth (Terraciano 2001: 244-45). This is precisely the group which has left us most of the Nahuatl-language texts from the *Tocuij Ñudzavui*.

Though the available documentation suggests Nahuatl was a prestigious administrative and commercial vehicular language, this does not exclude the possibility of smaller Nahuatl-speaking communities in the region. The first section of the *Historia Tolteca-Chichimeca* narrates the migration of the Nahuatl-speaking Nonoalca from Tula to the northwestern Papaloapan basin where they found their pueblos. Among the borders of the settled Nonoalca appears Xiuhquilla (the aforementioned Juquila), which was later incorporated into the domains of the lords of Coixtlahuaca (Kirchhoff et al. 1989, §78 and Doesburg 2002: 11-12). Though by the mid-sixteenth century, Chocholtec was spoken in Xiuhquilla, this does not eliminate the possibility of Nahuatl also being spoken there or in nearby communities in the northern *Tocuij ñudzavui*. Unfortunately however, there is little multilingual indigenous language material from this northern region which can be brought to bear on this issue.

Final Comments

The Mixtec and Nahuatl documents of the *Tocuij Ñudzavui* merit more study than has been given in this brief overview. Preliminary results however provide ample evidence of a functional, long-term multilingualism for some people in the region that extended from the Post-Classic through the first two centuries of the colony. Two variants of Mixtec were spoken in the region, which coincide largely with those spoken in adjacent zones. These variants were socially integrated with Chocholtec speakers either by bringing *saçê* (pueblos, called parcialidades or partes) or *sindi* (barrios) of different languages into a composite polity, or by families reaching across linguistic boundaries. Nahuatl was also used in the *Tocuij Ñudzavui*. Nahuatl's pre-colonial prestige was probably reinforced by its use by the colonial administration. In the absence of local Nahuatl speech communities, long distance trade may have been an important means of language acquisition.

Mixe-language tradition of writing as well as Nahuatl's continued value in the colonial regime. However, as was the case in the *Tocuij Ñudzavui,* language knowledge of Nahuatl was quite probably acquired outside this remote region. I thank Michel Oudijk for the references to these interesting late Nahuatl documents.

Annex: Nahuatl translation of a 1583 Provisión Real [AAT-68]

Transcription: Bas van Doesburg; translation: Michael Swanton

This *provisión real* was prepared January 29, 1583 by order of the Viceroy and sent to the *Alcalde Mayor* of Yanhuitlán. The original text would have been in Spanish. The Nahuatl version was presumably made for the local authorities of Tequixtepec and kept in the community's archive as part of the documentation regarding that land dispute. The original Spanish version of this text has not be localized and no colonial-period translation from the Nahuatl back into Spanish has been found.

The translation into Nahuatl may have resulted in certain changes from the original Spanish text. The term *tlatoli*, 'word, discourse' seems to be used in multiple senses such as 'dispute', 'report', 'decision', etc. In the translation into English here, no attempt has been made to assign such sense, and instead *tlatoli* is systematically, and unsatisfactorily, translated as 'word'. Several parts of the text were left in Spanish; in the translation, these are likewise left in Spanish but put in italics. Certain terms of indigenous social organization (*altepetl, maçehuali, tecpan tlatoani, tlaxilacali*) are left in Nahuatl.

As mentioned above, the Nahuatl registered in this text shows several interesting features. In the verbal morphology, two processes are attested in the text for the formation of the base 2 verb forms: (1) by loss of the stem-final vowel of verbs with base 1 forms ending in –*ia* or –*oa* and (2) no change from the base 1 for all other verbs. It also appears that there are instances of hypercorrection regarding perfect formation. In two cases, –*ia* and –*oa* verbs have added the participial suffix to form the perfect in the singular. Likewise, there is one instance of duplicating the participial suffix in the perfect (*ticmacacq*).

1583 Provisión	Classical Nahuatl	translation
oquitoc	ōquihtoh	s/he said it
omotzintic	ōmotzīntih	it began
ticmacacq	timacaqueh	we gave it

While verbs in this text do indicate plurality, nouns generally do not. The noun *maçehuali* appears in the singular even when one would expect a plural, for example when the corresponding verb is marked for the plural: '...*maçehuali ychan Teçictepeq yn ymaçehual doña Maria de Godoy ocalaquique...*' Translated: '…macehuales of the house of Tequixtepec, the macehuales of doña María Godoy entered…'

In this instance *maçehuali* appears in the absolute singular form (*maçehuali*) and the singular possessed form (*ymaçehual*), but fails to agree with the plural subject marking of the phrasal head (*ocalaquique*).

> 'don felipe por la graçia de dios rrey de castilla de leon de aragon de las dos çeçilias de jerusalen de portugal de navarra de granada de toledo de valençia de galizia de mallorcas de sevilla de çerdeña de cordova de corçega de murçia de jaen de los algarves de algezira de gibraltar de las yslas de canaria de las yndias orientales o oçidentales yslas y tierra firme

del mar oçeano archiduq[ue] de austria duq[ue] de borgoña de brabante y de milan conde de avspurge de flandes y de tirol y de barçelona señor de vizcaya e de molina etc tehuatliti toal[ca]lde mayor yn altepepan yanguitlan no motexiptla [lugar]teniente timohuetzitica xicmocaquiltica yxpan totlatocahui yhuan tlatoq[ue] oydores nican totecpan nican çiudad mexico yanguic tlali toyxpan omoteyxpahuico ytencopa maçehuali ychantzinco estançia san cristoval custlahuaca mopoa quitoa ytechi çe petiçion toyxpan calaquic quitoa ca yehuantin motlalia huel yn ytlali yn iquaxochi oquitlalique yn yquaxochi huel yn nezcan ytlali huel çenmicac çan ya quezqui tonatihui yehuanan maçehuali ychan te(pe)çictepeq[ue] yn ymaçehual doña maria de godoy ocalaquique yn ytlalpa niman opehueque quielimiquique yhuan oquichihuiq[ue] cali yhuan occequi tlamantli yn yelimiquiq[ue] ahui ypanpa amo mochachalanizq[ue] amo quipehualtizq[ue] pleyto yhuan mahuazq[ue] otechi motlatlanili toyxpan omotlanquaq[ue]tzaq[ue] ticmacazq[ue] ynin toamahui provision rreal ypanpa ticchihuaz tlatoli yn ypanpa ynin tlatoli motzintia axca ahui oticaquic melahuac ynin tlatoli ticchihuaz motequihui melahuac niman xicnahuiti moxitiniz cali aço tleyn oquichihuiq[ue] yn noncan[55] ytlal oquichihuaq[ue] yhuan monahuatiz amo quipanahuizq[ue] yn totlatol (ca huel) quipiazq[ue] yn yquaxoch ahui yn yquac oquimacaq[ue] yn yehuatli quipalehuia maçehuali tequiçiztepeq[ue] oquitoq[ue] amo melahuac yn ytlatol occequi tlacatli ypanpa tlali quitoa yn yaxca ca ytlal çe estançia de çaqualtongo tlaxilacali huel noncan altepetli tequiçiztepeq[ue] ca yehuatli oquimacaq[ue] yn yxpan tlatoq[ue] motlalia aya yn tecpan ahui oquimacaq[ue] toamahui ytoca executoria ahui yn ypanpa toamahui ocanaq[ue] yn ytlal yn oncan nezca yaxca quipiaya amo aqui ypan otlatoc yn yquac ocanaq[ue] yoqui oquitoc yn ypanpa toamahui executoria yhuan occequi tlamantli tlatoli yn yc omopalehuiq[ue] ycno toyxpan otechimotlali yn ypanpa ontlatoli occequinti tlaca oquitoq[ue] yxpan tlatoq[ue] ahui yn ypanpa ynin tlatoli monequi mochihuaz occequi tlamantli tlatoli noncan neçiz toyxpa ahui otimoçentlaliq[ue] timochintin titlatoq[ue] presidente oydores ticmacacq[ue] ynin toamahui yn ypanpa ynin tlatoli ahui tehuantin yoqui ticnequi ahui axcan timitzinahuatia ticnahuatiz yn omextin altepepan yn ypanpa yn tlatol yhuan çan moyolocopa ticchihuaz tlatoli yn ypanpa ynin tlatoli ypanpa ynin tlatoli noncan momelahuaz aqui yn ytlal aqui yn yquaxochi motlalia ynin tlali yn ypanpa omotzintic ynin tlatoli yhuan aqui tlacatli quipia ynin tlali aquin noncan axcan motlalia ahui momelahuaz ynin tlatoli tiquitaz tleyn amatli tleyn ypanpa noncan motlalia aço yni ypanpa omochihui tlatoli omochalaniq[ue] yomextin altepetli yn yehuatli omomacac quezquich itlali aço huel yehuatli tlali yni ypanpa ynin tlatoli yny oqui omochihuac [VERSO] aço occequi tlamantli aço oquipanahuiq[ue] yn tlatoli yn ypanpa yquaxochi yn yyomextin tlacatli aço axcan oquitzintique tlatoli yn ypanpa yehuatli tlatoli catica (a)hui omochihuac ynin tlatoli tictitlaniz nican totecpan yn iquac otiquitaq[ue] tictlatzontequizq[ue] tleyn mochihuaz amo occequi ticchihuaz tlatoli amo ticpanahuiz totlatol ytla ticpanahuiz tictlaxtlahuiz maquilpoali peso ytechi monequiz totlaçochan omochihuac mexico çenpoali ypan chicnahui tonatihui tonali meztli henero de mill e qui[nient]os y ochenta y tres a[ñ]os el conde de curuña el doctor p[edr]o farfan el doctor rrobles el doctor palaçio ye nehuatli sancho lopez agurto tlacuilo yn ychançinco totlatocahui onicchihuac ynin amatli yn ytencopa totlatocahui visorrey yhuan oydores rregistrada ju[an] serrano por chançiller ju[an] serrano.'

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[55] The Classical Nahuatl locative *oncān* is repeatedly attested in the text as *noncan*.

Don Felipe por la gracia de Dios rey de Castilla, de León, de Aragón, de las dos Cecilias, de Jerusalén, de Portugal, de Navarra, de Granada, de Toledo, de Valencia, de Galicia, de Mallorcas, de Sevilla, de Cerdeña, de Córdova, de Córcega, de Murcia, de Jaén, de los Algarves, de Algezira, de Gibraltar, de las islas de Canaria, de las indias orientales o oc-cidentales, islas y tierra firme del mar Océano, archiduque de Austria, duque de Borgoña, de Brabante y de Milan, conde de Avspurge, de Flandes y de Tirol y de Barcelona, señor de Vizcaya e de Molina, etc. to you, our *alcalde mayor* in the altepetl of Yanhuitlán, or your representative *[lugar]teniente*, please be seated. Know that before our lord [i.e. *presidente*] and our lords, the *oidores*, here in our tecpan [i.e. *audiencia*] in the *ciudad* of Mexico in the New World [i.e. *Nueva España*]; before us, he came to complain on behalf of the house of the macehuales of the *estancia* in San Cristóbal, Coixtlahuaca. It was read aloud from a *petición*; it was delivered aloud before us: They are the ones that settle in their lands and their boundaries well. They set their boundaries. It is quite apparent it is their land forever. Only a few days ago they, the macehuales of the house of Tequixtepec, the macehuales of doña María Godoy,[56] entered on their land, and thereupon the farmers started to cultivate as well as construct houses and other things. And because they will not make a hubbub, they will not start a *pleito* and complain. They asked and knelt down before us that we give our *provisión real* document, so that you will make a word, because of this word that now begins. And you heard that this word is true. You will do your true duty: immediately order that the houses or what they constructed there in their land they made are torn down, and it will be ordered that they do not go beyond our word. They will keep their boundaries. And when they gave this help, the macehuales in Tequixtepec said the other person's word is not true, because the said land is their possession. It is the land of an *estancia de* Zacualtongo, a tlaxilacalli indeed there in the altepetl of Tequixtepec. This is what they gave before the lords. No tecpan was settled. And they gave our document called an *ejecutoria*, and because of our document they took their land there.[57] It is clear it is their possession. They were guarding it so that tierra do not enter on it. When they took it, so he said, it was because of our *ejecutoria* document and other types of words with which the poor were helped. Before us it was put, because of the two words that others said before the lords. And due to this word, it is necessary that other types of words be made there that will appear before us. And we, all the lords, the *presidente* and *oidores*, gathered and gave this document because of this word. And thus do we want it. And now we order you that you order the two altepetl because of their word and only voluntarily[58] will you make a word on account of this word. There, it will be straightened out whose land is it, whose boundaries are they. This land is settled because this word began: who is the person that looks after this land, and who is now settled there? And this word will be straightened out. You will see on account of what document do they settle there, or why a word was made and both altepetl argued, how much of their land was given, or is it on account of this land itself that this word was so made, or other things, or did they go beyond the word because of the boundaries of both persons, or did they begin a word now because of a word that already existed. And once made, you will send this word

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[56] Doña María de Godoy was *encomendera* of Tequixtepec, and a *vecina* of Antequera, (Doesburg 2002)
[57] Cf. AAT-55a (Doesburg 2002: 58-63).
[58] 'Voluntarily' as a tentative translation of the Nahuatl *moyolocopa*.

here to our tecpan. When seen, we will judge what will be done. You will not additionally make a word. You will not go beyond our word. If you do, you will pay one hundred pesos needed for our precious house [i.e. *cámara*] It was made in México, 29 days of the month of *enero de mil quinientos y ochenta y tres años. El Conde de* Curuña. *El doctor* Pedro Farfan, *el doctor* Robles, *el doctor* Palacio. I, Sancho López Agurto, notary of the respected house [i.e. *cámara*] of our lord [i.e. *rey*], made this document by order of our lord *visorey* and *oidores, registrada Juan Serrano, por chanciller Juan Serrano*.

Abbreviations

AAT   Archivo Antiguo de Tequixtepec, San Miguel Tequixtepec.

AHPJ   Archivo Histórico de Poder Judicial, Oaxaca City.

BNAH   Biblioteca Nacional de Antropología e Historia, México City.

FC   Florentine Codex, see Anderson and Dibble (1950-1982).

IJAL   *International Journal of American Linguistics*

LC-Ca   Libro de Cuenta de Ca/andaxu (1592-1621). Chocholtec-language manuscript in the Municipal Archive of San Miguel Tulancingo. References to this document refer to the last two numbers of the year followed by the sequentially numbered entry for that year. E.g. LC-Ca, 95:11 refers to the eleventh entry for the year 1595.

LT-Teo   Libro de Testamentos de Teotongo. Chocholtec-language manuscript, BNAH, Colección Antigua 777. References to this document refer to the testament as they appear sequentially in the book.

LT-Tul   Libro de Testamentos de Tulancingo. Chocholtec-language manuscript in the Municipal Archive of San Miguel Tulancingo. References to this document refer to the testament as they appear sequentially in the book.

VUPA   Vanderbilt University Publications in Anthropology.

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Roberto C. Santos Pérez

El Archivo Histórico de Tlaxiaco y el Papel de las Comunidades Indígenas en la Recuperación de su Historia

El 19 de abril de 1519, al fundar Hernán Cortés la Villa Rica de la Vera Cruz, se instituye la creación del municipio en la Nueva España, el cual 'constituye la célula básica para la vida política del país' (Gónzalez Cicero 2005: 23).[1] El municipio, cuyo antecedente en la época precolombina podría ser el *calpulli*, sede de la organización política, administrativa y social de los pueblos mesoamericanos, como resultado de la relación entre sus habitantes con las autoridades que los encabezaban, generaron, como testimonio de esa relación, registros escritos o impresos en los que se legitimaban acciones y procederes que una y otra parte ejercían como resultado de pertenecer a una sociedad institucionalizada.

Así tenemos que los archivos municipales son, como lo definen Camarena y Villafuerte (2001: 195) 'la memoria institucional de la sociedad en la cual los testimonios se expresan a través de los documentos generados en ese momento histórico; donde aparecen las acciones y las formas de pensar de los miembros de esa sociedad'. La memoria, que como lo expongo en este trabajo, lejos de ser bien aprovechada y valorada por los ayuntamientos, ha vivido en el olvido expuesta a la destrucción y al saqueo, la cual en las últimas décadas, gracias al esfuerzo que muchos especialistas han hecho por crear conciencia en su recuperación y conservación, comienza a recobrar valor.

Hoy en día al ser considerados como espacios públicos, los archivos dejaron de ser exclusivos del manejo de los ayuntamientos (cf. Vidaurri 2005: 72), dando lugar a que la gente los consulte e investigue, aunque muchas veces implique escribir un par de solicitudes a las autoridades para acceder a su consulta; incluso, en muchos de los casos el acceso solo se da de manera parcial, ya que alguien que consulta demasiado o 'con mucha insistencia' un archivo puede ser visto como una amenaza para la seguridad y la integridad del municipio.

Sin embargo, lejos de muchos vicios que aun persisten alrededor de los archivos, la labor de investigación que académicos y especialistas hacen al trabajar con sus acervos

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[1] El proyecto de rescate del Archivo Histórico de Tlaxiaco ha sido posible gracias a la colaboración de cada una de las personas, que con su participación, sus preguntas y sus comentarios, nos han llevado a rescatar del abandono lo que debería ser valorado como la memoria histórica de nuestros pueblos.

Figura 1. Con mejores instalaciones, el Archivo Histórico de Tlaxiaco permanece en un lugar apropiado, muy diferente a los que fueron las bodegas del palacio municipal.

documentales devuelve a estos, parte de su valor e importancia como fuentes de información que son. Desafortunadamente, dada la distancia que existe entre los archivos municipales y las capitales, en donde se concentran las instituciones o los investigadores que suelen aprovecharlos, ocasiona que las visitas a estos lugares suela ser efímera. Por otra parte, la mala experiencia de los habitantes de las propias comunidades con los grandes archivos, ha provocado que muchas de las veces estos no volteen sus ojos hacia las fuentes documentales que se encuentran en sus municipios, haciendo del archivo un espacio poco consultado y que en consecuencia sobrevive, si es el caso, al margen del presupuesto municipal (Figura 1).

El trabajo que expongo mas adelante tiene que ver con mi desempeño como encargado de un archivo municipal y la tarea que emprendimos con algunas instituciones, entre ellas una radiodifusora cultural, para promover y difundir la riqueza histórica de nuestro municipio. Se trata de una tarea que logró estimular la participación de las comunidades, principalmente indígenas, y que se tradujo en la consolidación de un proyecto que por muchos años los ayuntamientos, ayudados por especialistas provenientes de diferentes instituciones, iniciaron y abandonaron consecutivamente.

Hoy parece ser, gracias a esa participación y al interés por recuperar su historia, que las comunidades, en nuestro caso, del Distrito de Tlaxiaco, Oaxaca, han logrado rescatar un espacio muy importante en que se resguarda parte de la memoria de los oaxaqueños.

Papeles inútiles

Los municipios al ser generadores, receptores y depositarios de miles o tal vez millones de solicitudes, testimonios, agradecimientos, demandas, reconocimientos, etc., se han visto, históricamente, rebasados por la documentación que cada cabildo genera como resultado de su gestión ante la administración municipal, a tal grado que una vez que termina esa gestión, los documentos son guardados en cajas – cuando hay ese cuidado – o bien son atados en bloques y son entregados a las nuevas autoridades, las cuales se

supone que los debieran de recibir, no sólo para resguardarlos y conservarlos, sino para evaluar el manejo de los recursos, de los bienes y de la propia administración municipal; así tenemos, según lo que podemos interpretar, que una vez que cada cabildo entraba en funciones se ocupaba en aprovechar el espacio de sus nuevas oficinas, mandando todo lo indeseable, excepto, quizás, aquella documentación que era de 'mayor' importancia (tierras, límites, etc.) a las bodegas, al almacén o al archivo, que no eran mas que cuartos o galeras lúgubres en donde papeles, roedores, polillas y aves, seguramente convivían a la merced de los embates del mal tiempo.

De esta forma, tenemos que los archivos lejos de haberse conservado y utilizado apropiadamente, se condenaron al olvido y a una destrucción progresiva, de la que seguramente algunos se salvaron por momentos, como fue el caso del archivo de Tlaxiaco, el cual, en el año de 1911, en pleno movimiento revolucionario, como lo cita Spores (2000), el presidente municipal encargado, Rosendo Feria, recibió un comunicado del Secretario de Gobierno en el que se le ordenaba guardar los archivos de las oficinas del Ayuntamiento, con el fin de evitar que fueran quemados, como lamentablemente había sucedido con otros, en donde las fuerzas revolucionarias luego de tomar las poblaciones quemaban sus archivos.

Sin embargo, muchos archivos que vivieron situaciones semejantes, y que como el caso de Tlaxiaco lograron salvarse de las amenazas de los revolucionarios, desafortunadamente no pudieron contra la ignorancia de sus propias autoridades, muchas de las cuales mandaron a quemar los documentos por considerarlos 'inútiles'.

Creo que uno de los comentarios que he oído con más frecuencia en el archivo es, precisamente, el que nos hacen muchos usuarios que nos visitan de las comunidades alrededor de Tlaxiaco, y que tiene que ver con 'la orden' que dio el presidente municipal, el síndico o cualquier otro, para mandar a quemar 'ese montón de papeles viejos'. Un comentario que refleja mucha angustia de quien generalmente lo hace.

Rescate, saqueo y abandono

El rescate del archivo de Tlaxiaco inició formalmente en 1989 con la visita del Dr. Ronald Spores a esa Ciudad, desafortunadamente el escaso interés y la desconfianza de las autoridades, puesto que se rumoraba que un americano estaba robando los tesoros escondidos de los tlaxiaqueños, motivó que éstos cerraran las puertas del archivo al Dr. Spores y como consecuencia se interrumpiera el proyecto de rescate del archivo histórico. La desconfianza y la ignorancia trajeron consecuencias graves para lo que hasta ese entonces era un enorme acervo documental, y el resultado fue el saqueo sistemático de la documentación, y es que ni el personal ni las autoridades municipales podían dejar ir la oportunidad de revisar los documentos, recién clasificados, y quizás tomar alguno para llevarlo a su casa y 'protegerlo' de los saqueadores.

Después de este desagradable capítulo vino nuevamente el abandono del archivo, toda la documentación fue enviada a las maltrechas bodegas de la presidencia, en donde

Figura 2. Al inicio de los trabajos de clasificación, la falta de un techo en la planta superior del ex convento provocó la inundación del archivo. Nuevamente se perdía parte del valioso acervo de los mixtecos.

permanecería seis años, expuesta a la humedad provocada por las goteras del techo, a los daños provocados por aves y roedores, pero principalmente a los daños provocados por el mismo personal de la presidencia, quienes utilizaban esas bodegas para guardar combustibles, materiales de construcción, solventes, pinturas, etc.

En junio del 2000, al iniciar el programa para el rescate de los archivos municipales (Secretaría de la Defensa Nacional, Archivo General de la Nación [SEDENA-AGN] 2000), el Ayuntamiento de Tlaxiaco hizo lo propio al iniciar el proyecto para rescatar su archivo. Era la primera vez que, con un autentico interés de las autoridades y el apoyo del programa AGN-SEDENA, el archivo veía una verdadera oportunidad. Sin embargo, aún faltaba más por venir, desafortunadamente en contra del archivo. Nuevamente su enemigo se encontraba en casa, ya que a pesar de la difusión que se le dio a ese proyecto y del enorme esfuerzo que el pueblo de Tlaxiaco sabía que se estaba haciendo por rescatar su memoria histórica, hubo gente que no quiso apoyar y que se opuso a que el archivo se ubicara en el espacio que el Juzgado Mixto le había cedido.

Este conflicto trajo como consecuencia que el patronato que tenía a cargo las obras de reconstrucción del ex convento, en donde se ubica el archivo, no reparara a tiempo uno de los techos del edificio y como resultado, con las primeras lluvias el archivo comenzara a inundarse. Nuevamente parte de la documentación se ponía en riesgo y acabaría por perderse (Figura 2).

Proyecto de rescate y difusión de la memoria histórica

En el año 2002, al integrarme como responsable del Archivo Histórico de Tlaxiaco, poco a poco fui conociendo la historia detrás del archivo y me sorprendió tanto, como la forma en que este lugar era considerado, un espacio que almacenaba papeles viejos y que poca gente conocía, y que además solo era visitado por aquellos que pensaban que

aun seguía siendo el Juzgado Mixto. Así que lo primero que traté de hacer fue presentar una propuesta de trabajo al presidente municipal, la cual consistía en contratar algunas personas para continuar con los trabajos de clasificación, desafortunadamente no pude contar con nadie ya que el archivo no tenía un presupuesto asignado. De ahí en adelante tenía que intentarlo por mi cuenta.

Afortunadamente, algunas escuelas de nivel preparatoria cuentan con un programa permanente se servicio social, gracias al cual pudimos llamar a muchos estudiantes para que nos apoyaran con los trabajos de clasificación. Su apoyo fue fundamental para avanzar.

Conforme avanzábamos con la clasificación comenzamos a participar en algunos programas a los que nos invitaban las radiodifusoras locales, XETLX y XETLA, ahí aprovechábamos para invitar a la gente para que visitara el archivo y para que colaboraran en los trabajos que estábamos haciendo; la respuesta fue poca, sin embargo teníamos que seguir invitando a más gente. El siguiente paso fue comenzar a dar platicas y conferencias a los estudiantes de las escuelas. Fue entonces cuando el panorama comenzó a cambiar.

Con la participación de los estudiantes comenzamos a desarrollar un nuevo plan de trabajo, el cual consistió principalmente en promover el archivo como un lugar en el que la gente podía acceder libremente y conocer el potencial que tiene un documento para reconstruir nuestro pasado. Tomamos un tema que la gente pudiera identificar fácilmente, y posteriormente lo fuimos extendiendo hasta que creímos que habíamos cumplido con nuestro objetivo.

Los temas a escoger eran varios: la construcción del convento, los antecedentes del pueblo de Tlaxiaco, la guerra de Independencia, la construcción del reloj público, entre otros. Optamos por el último, ya que fue un acontecimiento que muchas personas vivieron de cerca durante la década de 1940, mismo que hoy en día se caracteriza por ser uno de los símbolos mejor identificados en la población.

Una vez que comenzamos a llevar a cabo la investigación del 'reloj', los datos nos fueron guiando hacía muchas direcciones, por lo que decidimos recopilar todos aquellos que aparecían y que se vinculaban con nuestro tema. Dar a conocer el origen de esa información, fue uno de nuestros mejores logros, por que no solo acercaron a la gente al archivo, sino que estimulamos su deseo de investigar. Al comenzar a participar, la misma gente nos permitió explorar otros temas, algunos de los cuales se darían a conocer posteriormente; esto se debió a que, prácticamente, con la visita de cada persona había una pregunta, preguntas que registrábamos en una libreta y que cuando nos dimos cuenta que algunas se realizaban con más frecuencia que otras, decidimos darles una respuesta, investigándolas. Al mismo tiempo, gracias al respaldo del equipo de la XETLA, decidimos abordar un proyecto más ambicioso, hacer que nuestras investigaciones se editaran y grabaran como cápsulas radiofónicas, y llegaran a una mayor audiencia. El nuevo proyecto requirió que pusiéramos un mayor esfuerzo en la investigación y que nos apoyáramos más en los estudiantes que hacían la clasificación, sin embargo, fueron

Figura 3. La promoción del archivo se ha hecho desde adentro, tratando de estimular la investigación en la gente que visita este lugar cada día.

cuatro estudiantes quienes se involucraron completamente con el proyecto radiofónico, ya que además de investigar también eran las encargadas de hacer las grabaciones de las cápsulas (Figura 3).

A partir de ese momento el archivo comenzó a ser visitado y consultado por un público muy diverso, que iba desde estudiantes de escuelas de nivel primaria, hasta investigadores institucionales; todos provenientes de distintos sectores, pero principalmente de las comunidades indígenas del Distrito de Tlaxiaco. Con todos ellos estábamos por descubrir una nueva oportunidad para el Archivo Histórico de Tlaxiaco.

Participación de los usuarios

Mientras que estábamos llevando a cabo nuestro trabajo, la realidad dentro del Ayuntamiento seguía siendo la misma, y su apoyo, al suministrarnos de materiales de oficina y no de un equipo humano, reflejaba el escaso interés hacia el archivo por parte de las autoridades. Fue necesario que a partir del trabajo que ya habíamos hecho, formuláramos nuevos planteamientos, ahora para conseguir un equipo de cómputo, el cual era indispensable ya que la vieja computadora Apple que había traído de mi casa se había quemado, debido a que el suministro de energía eléctrica que teníamos era ilegal.

Con el apoyo de muchos voluntarios, y con el respaldo de algunas empresas, decidimos organizar, casi como un pretexto, el aniversario número 56 de la construcción del reloj público de Tlaxiaco. Gracias al éxito de ese evento logramos que de parte de algunos de los invitados nos donaran el equipo de cómputo que tanto esperábamos, lo cual con el tiempo nos facilitaría mucho en nuestro trabajo.

La participación de los usuarios del archivo no se hizo definitiva hasta que supieron que las puertas de ese lugar realmente estaban abiertas para ellos, ya que como algunos me referían, acceder a los archivos estatales y nacionales les había dejado una mala experiencia, por que además de que la visita a esos lugares implicaba un viaje muy costoso económicamente, también implicaba un costo moral, y es que lo más difícil para muchos era exponerse a la discriminación y a los abusos, los cuales irónicamente eran hechos por parte de los guardias de seguridad, por los encargados del mostrador, o por

personas que pensaban que no tenían nada que hacer ahí, y no por quienes efectivamente les proporcionaban el servicio.

Sin embargo, una vez que se comenzó a superar ese estigma en contra de los archivos, comenzamos a tener un flujo continuo de usuarios, lo cual, con el tiempo, sería nuestra mejor defensa para evitar que un proyecto como este se volviera a abandonar. A partir de ese momento el objetivo se centró en continuar con la producción radiofónica, en estimular más la investigación y en seguir invitado a la gente para que consultara el archivo.

La presencia y participación de los usuarios, una vez que comenzó a ser más activa, hizo que la gente volteara sus ojos hacia nuestro trabajo; comenzamos a tener vistas de la prensa, políticos, investigadores, niños, entre muchos otros. La nueva realidad para nosotros ahora era que teníamos que ofrecer pláticas especiales a grupos, que si bien llegaban por su propio interés, muchos de ellos llegaban por que nuestras autoridades los enviaban por que creían que en el archivo se debía encontrar toda la verdad; es decir, algunos llegaban tratando de saber la historia del mole tlaxiaqueño, otros por que querían recopilar cuentos y leyendas, y preguntas así por el estilo.

Pero entre las muchas visitas que tuvimos, la mejor experiencia que vivimos fue con algunos usuarios que nos enseñaron más de lo que pudimos apoyarlos. Y es que una pregunta constante, que asumo que muchos directores de archivos les habrá tocado vivir, es cuando llega la gente de las comunidades preguntando por el origen de su pueblo, la fecha de fundación o el año en que se comenzó a construir, tal o cual cosa, y aunque generalmente había una respuesta para ellos, hubo un campesino en particular, Zeferino, que en una ocasión nos visitó y llegó con la misma pregunta, ¿aquí puedo encontrar la fecha en que se fundó mi comunidad? Y mi respuesta, fue la misma; 'tienes que investigar en documentos y libros, y quizás logres saber algo, pero no creo que vayas a encontrar una fecha en particular'.

Zeferino decidió que tenía que investigar como se lo sugerí y me pidió ayuda, así que se organizó en su casa y con su parcela y comenzó a trabajar; contó con la suerte que en esos días llegaron dos investigadoras al archivo, las cuales le brindaron apoyo y asesoría para plantear su investigación, por lo que después de casi tres meses de investigar en el archivo y en su comunidad, se me acercó para comentarme los avances de su trabajo. La recopilación de datos y la interpretación que estaba haciendo de ellos, lo estaban acercando a lo que él buscaba, por lo que le pregunté cuál era su plan para dar a conocer su trabajo, a lo cual me respondió que su gente al estar perdiendo su historia, y él al no tener recursos para publicar su trabajo, hacía algo que era más valioso para su pueblo y era compartirlo con ellos en las reuniones, donde tenía la oportunidad de platicar y dar a conocer lo que estaba investigando. Finalmente Zeferino tuvo que acelerar su trabajo y suspenderlo, ya que tenía que salir a trabajar a los Estados Unidos; desafortunadamente, la necesidad que él tenía, como la de muchas personas que viven en condiciones semejantes, lo hizo abandonar un proyecto muy importante para su comunidad (Figura 4).

La oportunidad que tuve al trabajar con personas como Zeferino, fue el darme cuenta,

Figura 4. El trabajo de Zeferino Cruz ejemplifica el esfuerzo de los investigadores que decidieron combinar la parcela con la investigación, y dieron muchos aportes para su comunidad.

así como lo percibieron después nuestras autoridades, que había un verdadero interés por parte de las comunidades indígenas en rescatar y conocer su pasado, y que además esa participación estaba estimulando a otras personas, pero sobre todo, gracias a esa constante participación, el archivo de Tlaxiaco estaba siendo rescatado y ubicado en lo más alto de la atención de las comunidades.

Al iniciar nuestro tercer año de trabajo, hubo cambio de autoridades, volvía el presidente municipal que originalmente había iniciado el proyecto con SEDENA y AGN, y gracias a que habíamos logrado rescatar una vez más el archivo, junto con los usuarios provenientes, la mayoría, de las comunidades indígenas; ya no se volvió a repetir la historia de rescate y abandono que había vivido este lugar, ahora, por el contrario, gracias a la presencia que este lugar ha logrado, las autoridades municipales autorizaron un presupuesto mayor para contar con tres personas que apoyan los trabajos de clasificación. Hoy en día el interés por mantener abierto este lugar ha provenido tanto de las autoridades, como por parte de los usuarios, quienes su único interés ha sido el rescatar y conocer más sobre su pasado, el cual consideran que ya han perdido.

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Juan Julián Caballero

The Mixtec Language in the Globalization Era. Challenges and Struggles

The region or province known as La Mixteca is located in the South of the Mexican Republic. The Mixtec Region or Ñuu Savi[1] encompasses the Mexican States of Puebla, Guerrero and Oaxaca. The total territorial extension is 34,804 square kilometers (Complamar 1978:1). In Oaxaca there are 16,334 square kilometers, in Puebla the extension is 8,201 square kilometers and in Guerrero 10,449 square kilometers. Historically, the Ñuu Savi territory is divided into the High Mixtec Region, the Low Mixtec Region and the Costal Mixtec Region and comprises a total of 176 municipalities: Oaxaca 156, Guerrero 13 and Puebla 10. This would be the total territorial extension of the Mixtec Region.[2]

Due to the highly sterile and desert like soil, the Mixtec Region is considered one of the poorest regions in the country in terms of economics and alienation. Because of this, the majority of the population dedicates itself to subsistence agriculture. Recently, migration has become an important element in Mixtec life experience. To this population we have to add, therefore, those who are now living and working in other areas, outside of the historical territory, such as the Isthmus of Tehuantepec, the cities of Oaxaca and Puebla, the State of Mexico, the Federal District, Monterrey, Ensenada, the Valley of San Quentin, Tijuana BC., as well as Fresno and San Diego (California, USA) and various other cities in the United Sates. And, finally, there are those who no longer speak the native language of their forefathers but identify with and feel proud of Mixtec history, language and culture. Sometimes they even feel more Mixtec than those who speak the language and live in their communities of origin.

With respect to the Mixtec population, the most important of the criteria used by the National Institute of Geographic Statistics (INEGI 2000) to define who are Mixtecs and

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[1] Ñuu Savi is a concept that in Spanish means 'people or peoples of the rain'. Other variants are: Ñuu Davi, Ñuu Dau, Ñuu Sau, Ñuu Dawi Ñuu Djavi, Ñuu Javi. It has been decided at the Encounters as well as at the Congresses and Workshops on linguistic development that have been organized to recuperate this concept that is natural for those who inhabit this region.

[2] Other studies like those of Miguel A. Bartolomé and Alicia Barabas (1999: 142) point out that in the State of Oaxaca alone the territorial extension of the Mixtecs is 18, 759 square kilometers.
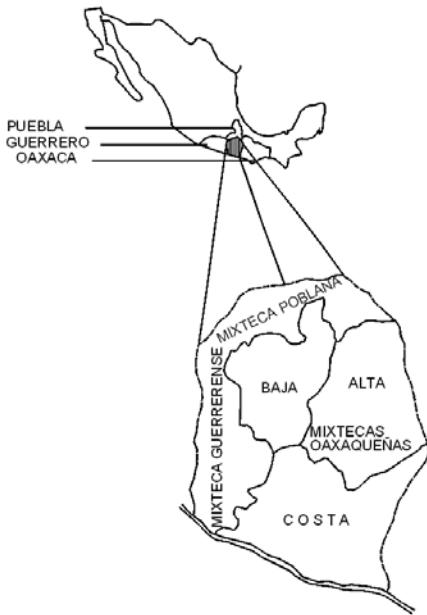
Map 1. Mapa de la Mixteca

who are not, is the native language. The latest data we have are the 2000 Census, which shows that Oaxaca has 773,524 speakers and non-speakers of the language (Anuario Estadístico 2001:71-78). Until now it is not know what other criteria were used to define a person as a speaker of Mixtec. In the State of Guerrero there are 400,000 speakers of the language (INI 2002: 43) and in the State of Puebla 25,000 speakers are reported (INI 2002: 46). In total, there are 1,198,524 Mixtecs in just those 3 States of the Republic. Up to this point, the data do not specify how many speakers of the language are living outside of the historical territory[3] and there are no precise criteria to identify them as such.

The major portion of the Ñuu Savi population is concentrated in the State of Oaxaca (Oaxaca: 64.53 %, Guerrero: 33.7 % and Puebla 2.08 %). Other linguistic groups exist within the Mixtec Region such as Triqui, Chocholtec, Amuzgo, Cuicatec and Ixcatec, who in some way have influence the already complex reality of different dialectical variants, so that the linguistic variation of Tu'un Savi becomes more pronounced over time.

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[3] The 1990 Census reports 476,976 speakers of the Mixtec language (Smith 193: 5). By the Census of 2000 the Mixtec speaking population had grown considerably. What is the cause of this data? A possible interpretation derives, on the one hand, from the indigenous movement against the celebration of five centuries of colonization by the Spanish government and on the other fact that the indigenous movement of the EZLN of Chiapas has contributed to a raising of consciousness about the Mexican reality.

According to archaeological and historic studies, a civilization developed in the Mixtec Region that is comparable to the Teotihuacan, Mayan, Aztec and others of the Mesoamerican Area. We have documents known as *Naandeye* or codices, which contain information that refers back to the beginning of the so-called Postclassic period (9th century). Alfonso Caso laid the foundation for the interpretation of these manuscripts, recognizing that they were written by the ancient Mixtecs in memory of their ancestors, and told about their pilgrimages, their conquests, the heroic feats of their leaders and the genealogies of their kings and queens, such as Lord 8 Deer, 'Jaguar Claw', and the great Lady 6 Monkey 'Power of the Plumed Serpent' (see Pérez Jiménez, this volume). The few codices that have been preserved from the large amount of documents existing among the Ñuu Savi at the time of the Spanish colonization, are found today dispersed in different libraries and museums, mostly in Europe and the United States.

This complex civilizing process was interrupted violently during the first years of the Sixteenth Century. On the one hand the population was drastically reduced, due to forced labor, diseases that had been seen never before, religious oppression and the beginning of the transformation of the native societies according to the interests of the Spanish Crown. On the other hand, the development of their knowledge was interrupted and negated. The same process continues until now in each and every one of the communities of Ñuu Savi.

The situation of the indigenous peoples did not change during the Independence era. The only change that occurred was the removal of the colonial power from the hands of those of the Spanish Peninsula to deposit it in the hands of their Mexico-born descendants, who designed a Nation-State after European models, preferring national homogeneity above cultural diversity. Some time later, during the revolutionary period, this same problem did not only continue, but became connected to the dispute over power on the part of those who felt themselves to be owners of this country. These battles determined the policies for the development of the country, always from the desire to forge a 'developed' nation with only one culture, that of the West, with Spanish as the only language of communication.

But what should be done with the native population that resisted this 'civilizing process' or change altogether? In an attempt to comply with the need for '*castellanización*' and acculturation of this 'backward' population, the policy makers chose education as the best road to foster the integration of the native populations into the national society.[4]

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[4] With the first Post-Revolutionary governmental regimes the so-called Houses of the People were established to give impetus to integral projects for the rural and indigenous peoples. The same can be said about the House of the Indigenous Student in Mexico City and the Mexican Rural School headed by the teacher Rafael Ramirez in the thirties, the Indigenous Boarding School under the regime of Lázaro Cárdenas, the creation of the National Indigenous Institute at the end of the 1940s and the Bilingual Schools under the responsibility of the General Management of Indigenous Schools in 1978.

Today, in the very beginning of the third millennium, many years distant from the compulsion of uniformity upon the country, the situation of Mexico has not changed fundamentally. We still find ourselves in chaotic and paradoxical moments: some resist being converted into 'people of reason', while others, very comfortably, align themselves with the powers that be and hide their identity, their own history and all that is implied by being born in some region of Ñuu Savi.

Background

Inscribed within the framework of complexity explained in previous paragraphs, are different projects for the cultural and linguistic recovery of the native and historical peoples of this country. An example of this endeavor is the foundation of Ve'e Tu'un Savi, A.C.[5] This 'Academy of the Mixtec Language' was created a decade and a half ago in Ñuu Savi in order to share different reflections about the language, culture and history not only of those who inhabit the historical territory, but also of those who are now living outside of it. It also synthesizes the efforts of those who have gotten together during the six meetings of 'Writers in the Mixtec Language', convened by the Center of Investigation and Diffusion 'Ñuu Savi'. The latter, CID-ÑUU SAVI, A.C., is a Civil Association formed in 1990 by a group of professionals of Mixtec origin who participated in two courses about Mixtec Codices organized by the CIESAS Oaxaca and taught by Maarten Jansen during the summers of 1988 and 1989. Among the central objectives of CID-ÑUU SAVI is the documentation and study of the cultural, linguistic, social, economic and historical values of the Mixtec people and the promotion of their preservation, maintenance and development.

Those of us who propitiated the first reflections came from different disciplines but fundamentally from the Program for Professional Training of Ethnolinguists (a unique experience in Latin America).[6] Starting here, Vicente Paulino Casiano Franco, the late Pedro Constancio Ortiz Lopez, Eduardo García Santiago, Marcos A. Cruz Bautista, Gabriel Caballero Morales y Juan Julián Caballero began to plan an ambitious project. It should be taken into account, however, that, despite of having been trained to promote and evaluate the cultural, linguistic and historical development of our peoples, not all of us feel that need nor do we all share this vision.

In this journey we have called upon companions with training in Linguistics, Anthropology and Sociology and upon others who do not have a specific training. I want to mention the following persons who have joined the effort to build a shared space in

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[5] *Ve'e* = house; *Tu'un* = word; *Savi* = rain: 'House of the word of the rain'. In free translation, it is called 'Academy of the Mixtec Language' (Academia de la Lengua Mixteca).

[6] Fifty-three *Licenciados* graduated in the first class of Ethnolinguists. They were trained at the installations of CREFAL in the city of Pátzcuaro, Michoacan between 1979 and 1982. There were 42 fellow graduates in the second class and the training was carried out in the installations of the San Pablo Apatitlan Boarding School in Tlaxcala between 1983 and 1987. In total there were nearly 100 fellow graduates.

favor of the culture, history and language of Ñuu Savi and have participated in an important way in the development of activities for Tu'un Savi: Alonso Solano González, Ubaldo López García, Jovito F. Santos Reyes, Gaudencio Solano Solano, Maximino Sánchez Ventura, Josefa González Ventura, Rodrigo Vásquez Peralta, Juvenal E. López Hernández, Ezequiel Damián Guzmán, Martina Gálvez, Severiano Cuellar Mendoza, Ignacio Santiago Pérez, Elías Virgilio Sánchez Cruz, Feliciano A. Gómez Quiroz, Ignacio Balbuena Cidel (r.i.p.), Eusebio García Mendoza (r.i.p.), Hilda López Gaitán, Julián Jiménez, Alverino López López, Alvaro Ortiz Ortiz, Maurilia Hernández, Guadalupe Santos Santiago, Juvencio Pablo León, Tobías Hernández, José López Bautista, Antolín López Mendoza, Alvaro B. Aparicio Martínez, Karlos Tachisavi, Pedro Velasco, María Vásquez, Tiburcio Pérez Castro, Francisco Paulino Sierra Cruz, Rufino Domínguez, Gonzalo Mauro Montiel Aguirre, Angelina Trujillo, Valentina Torres and others.

We know of other compatriots of Ñuu Savi origin who have written texts in tu'ún savi. Moreover, they are authors of other texts, about whom we know very little. Needless to say, the urgency to promote writing in this language is great. Due to the conditions of subordination and alienation of the indigenous languages and of the Mixtec language in particular, we do not as yet have the conditions to enable us to attend to the development of reading of texts in our language. Therefore, along with the development of writing, it is necessary to prepare future readers of such texts. To do the opposite only justifies a State project. This constitutes our explanation as to why we must share our efforts to continue to build and strengthen spaces where both those who live in the original territory and those who live in other socio-cultural contexts can meet and find themselves.

During the time that Ve'e Tu'un Savi has existed as a shared space, it has been possible to attend more than a hundred workshops on writing in Tu'un Savi, the mayority of which were directed by Mixtec speaking teachers. Various themes and activities that have to do with the situation of our nation have been approached: the history of our people going from the period of Lord 8 Deer through the Independence Period, the Reform, the Revolution and the Post-Revolution, the Codices, economics, cosmogony and of course our language as heritage and vehicle of communication. Taking into account that the fundamental objective has been to revert the linguistic policy of aggression toward our language and our culture, it has been necessary to set forth and guide our first efforts to revitalize our language through the exercise of reading and writing.

Starting with the recommendations of the six Encounters and eight Congresses of Ve'e Tu'un Savi, carried out in different parts of the historical territory (Ñuu Savi), courses, workshops and conferences have been organized to define from the start the practical orthography of the language, a central point from which it is possible to examine the identity and proposal of a norm of the writing of this language among other themes.

In view of the need to continue with the analysis, discussion and proposal of different activities around the language of our fathers, it has been deemed necessary to create training courses, directed at small groups of people interested in practicing writing,

which have the following central objective. To identify, analyze and propose unique criteria that lead to improvement in the register of knowledge in the native language of this people. That is to say, even though the space exists to think this native language over again and despite the existence of incipient agreements about how to unify criteria in the writing of this language, we are still, as can be seen, far from realizing, establishing and generalizing unique criteria for this writing. This at least is the justification for meeting among those who have attended reading and writing workshops in Tu'un Savi both within and outside of all the territory.

Like a typical Non Governmental Organization (NGO) that does not have even the most minimal conditions for the development of our activities, the actions of the academy has been severely limited. These have remained at the level of promotion and we have attended very little to what has to do with the exercise of writing and the development of oral aspects of our language.

Principal objectives of Ve'e Tu'un Savi

In our experience, backing the development of writing of a living language which was maintained for so long at an oral level, is not easy. Prejudice exists among one's own and among outsiders, against the value that said language holds. It demands above all examination, reflection and analysis of each historical process in which a supposedly superior culture oppresses another 'inferior' one. In addition, it should be clear that a project of this nature must rely upon the sympathy and support of the other speakers, and that the project must offer concrete solutions for the problems of social inequality caused by these asymmetric and antagonistic relationships. That is to say, we must prepare ourselves and prepare others to participate in a project of ethnic-cultural recovery as a people whose civilizing development was interrupted more than five hundred years ago. In this matter I am in agreement with Leopoldo Valiñas (1983) who reported about the literacy campaign of the Mixe language (ayuuk). Any literacy campaign project for a language that has remained in an exclusively oral dimension, must go further than just a group of graphemes.

When we set forth the development of the Mixtec language we refer not only to propose going from oral to written, but also toward promoting knowledge of the very language, the registering of diverse knowledge: mathematics, medicine, economics, religion, astronomy, cosmogony, etc., the creation of poetry and narrative, elaboration of grammars, dictionaries, vocabularies, and similar works.

On the other hand, Rainer Enrique Hamel (1993: 10) has taken up Jean Laponce (1984) once again to support a generalized and at the same time controversial opinion that the principle of territoriality is the best guarantee for the survival of a language in situations of alienation and asymmetry. In this sense, territoriality has the possibility of reinforcing the social web of the ethno-linguistic'minority' that can counterbalance the displacing impact of the dominant language, in this case, Spanish.

Also when we set out to standardize the language of our fathers, we start little by little to create awareness and recognition of its value not only among those who speak it but also among those who for a long time have stigmatized it. Therefore, our efforts are centered upon the creation of an orthographic writing system, the socialization of the latter among the speakers, the use of writing and reading, and, finally, analysis of the grammatical structure and a general reflection on the language (Hamel 1993: 10).[7]

The central objectives of the development of the Mixtec language proposed by the Academy of the Mixtec language are among others:

– Recuperate and develop the linguistic and cultural diversity of the Mixtec people.
– Foment and develop the historical and cultural values based on the knowledge of and writing in the native language.
– Fortify the identity of those who live in Ñuu Savi by means of oral and written expression in the language.
– Development of the language and other cultural expressions.

To start realizing this, it is necessary to organize different activities and workshops, in which the entire population, speakers and non speakers, children, teenagers, adults and old people, men and women can participate

The analysis and discussion center on the following central themes as a way of advancing with the workshops for writing and reading in the language:

a. The Mixtec Region as a space:
   1. Localization,
   2. History (historical monuments, architecture, codices),
   3. Culture,
   4. Religion,
   5. Philosophy (Cosmovision),
   6. Positive law (customary law, usages and customs).
b. Orthographic system of the Mixtec language:
   1. Antecedents, the Center of Research and Diffusion 'Ñuu Savi',
   2. Ve'e Tu'un Savi, A.C. 'Academy of the Mixtec Language.
c. Use of writing and reading:
   1. Make the use of graphemes uniform,
   2. Recording knowledge of central themes.
d. Exercise of oral expression and development of a literary tradition.
e. Exercises in translation of the Mixtec language to Spanish and its implications.

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[7] Based on the term 'language planning' coined by Einar Haugan (1959), Rainer Enrique Hamel referred to the elaboration of an orthographic norm, a grammar and a dictionary to guide the written and oral use in a non homogenous community as the ideal and it was also taken up once again by Heinz Kloss (1969) who maintains that the proposal of planning the body of a specific language would be a way of steering us to arrive at the elaboration of alphabets, the standardization and the broadening or creation of vocabularies of the language (1993: 89).

Some advances

After a decade and a half of intense activity, in more than one hundred communities, the culture, history and language of our ancestors have been promoted and reflected upon, while, slowly but steadily more and more speakers have become sensitized and made aware of the values of our language and millenary culture, as a first step to recover our knowledge and our ways of life.

Goals

The distinct native languages that are still spoken in Oaxaca not only require linguistic planning to maintain an oral level, but also need to begin the process of development of writing in order to be put on the same level as the other languages of the world. Historically, the indigenous languages have been socially and politically alienated through different projects of linguistic planning. The effort to write and know the language should not remain in the writing of texts in these languages only, but should be accompanied by the preparation of the readers of the texts. In that sense, the effort should be collective and not individual. On one hand, there should be the creation of diverse texts and on the other, the formation of readers. The majority languages such as Spanish, English, French and Italian or Portuguese have solved the job of literacy, the teaching of reading and writing and the reflections about these languages in the educational institutions at different levels. In our communities that still maintain a solely oral tradition as with the Zapotec, Mayan, Otomi, Mixtec, Chinantec or Chatino, our efforts should go further than the simple desire of wanting to write in our languages as a mental exercise. Together with the need to write and read, we must prepare those who can read us, the consumers of said tests. THAT IS THE GREAT COMMITMENT of those interested in the development of writing. Some obligatory questions that we must ask ourselves are: Where shall we begin? Is there a will among those of us who still speak the language of our fathers and grandfathers to do something for it? Are we prepared professionally for it? These are some of the challenges that we have as members of this culture who are conscious of the state of abandonment of our cultures.

– Organizational level: Collective Directorate. Until now, the same structure and the same functions have been maintained that were set forth since the foundation of Ve'e Tu'un Savi, A.C. en 1997.
– The management of resources for the carrying out of different academic activities: research, diffusion and professionalism of the knowledge of the Mixtec language.
– The search for collaboration among branches where the higher management works in such a way that two or three of them become responsible in a permanent manner of the activities of linguistic development at the headquarters of Ve'e Tu'un Savi, A.C.
– The establishment of mechanisms for the realization of projects of research about the language.

- The establishment of policies for broadening the spaces for discussion and decision about the future of the Mixtec language: Its own space, means of diffusion, furnishings and real estate, etc. Also to be able rely upon the necessary means to facilitate movement to the Mixtec territory as well as outside it.
- Organization of academic events such as symposiums, seminars, conferences and specialized courses where the rest of the members of this millenary people can all participate.
- The establishment of permanent communication strategies with the speakers and with the regional coordinators.
- The creation and functioning of a Ve'e Tuún Savi, A.C. web page.

Some advances in operative matters

a. Until now, a reliable donation of a piece of property for the construction of minimal installations for Ve'e Tu'un Savi[8] has theoretically been attained by way of the municipal authorities of the City of Tlaxiaco, Oaxaca. It is a space that will allow us to develop distinct activities that have to do not only with the language but with other aspects of the Mixtec culture.
b. We have the necessary technical files for the construction of our own building. That is to say, space that unites the minimum conditions:
- A room for meetings and the projections of videos.
- Three classrooms.
- Cubicles for offices.
- Tu'un Savi laboratory.
- Computer room.
- Specialized library.
- A space for lodging.
- A space for bathroom facilities.

c. In addition, upon starting activities we should at least have computer equipment, a photographic camera, a video camera, a copy machine, an overhead projector, and a slide projector. To organize diverse activities to reinforce the maintenance and development of the Mixtec language through the use of educational spaces in coordination with the National Institute of Indigenous Languages (INALI), the educational authorities and other institutions.[9]

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[8] We have the document for the donation of a 398.92 square meter piece of property donated by the previous Municipal authority of Tlaxiaco, Oaxaca (2002-2004), in the place called La Cruz Llorado, Tenth Section of the Barrio of San Diego, of the City of Tlaxiaco. According to the same authorities, the deed of said property is in the process of being written up.
[9] In the Political Constitution of the United Mexican States Article 2 sets forth that '…The [Mexican] Nation has a multicultural composition originally sustained by their indigenous peoples who are those descendents of the population that inhabited the actual territory of the country at the beginning of the colonization and who conserve their own social, economic, cultural and political institutions or part of them...' (2005).

Work Program

1. Specialized courses

From the beginning of the creation of work proposal for the Mixtec language as a possibility of development, in conjunction with education and our ways of living, we have felt the need to grow not only in the number of initiates, but in the amount of work. Nevertheless, the demands outweigh our capacity. Thus we face the urgent need to implement strategies of organization of one or various specialized courses that have as their objective not only realizing the development of writing in Tu'un Savi, the systematic study of the language and the work of elaborating texts about different knowledge of the culture and history, but also to implement a program directed at those interested in reproducing the same activities in each dialectical region but also to support the educational activities that are carried out in the educational institutions of Ñuu Savi. This specialized course will take place in an institution that has to do with the Mixtec culture; it could be the installations of the Universidad Tecnológica de la Mixteca (UTM) in Huajuapan de Leon, Oaxaca, in the sub-headquarters of the Universidad Pedagógica Nacional (UPN) of Tlaxiaco, Oaxaca, or as well, in one of the bilingual schools that function in the same region.

Programs for training courses and the teaching of Tu'un Savi to the young people who do not speak the language. In the same way, there is a plan to organize courses for those who wish to develop writing, reading and the creation of literature in this language.

2. Research

The research projects should be elaborated with those who have an interest not only in making their knowledge more concrete but of sharing it among the speakers. The themes that we propose to research are the following: elaboration of a dialectological map, morphology, syntax, verbs, pronouns, greetings, archaic names, animal nomenclature, plant nomenclature, religious knowledge, mathematics, medicinal plants and cosmovision, among others. It is proposed that the products of the research be converted into didactic materials for study in the educational institution that function in Ñuu Savi.

3. Workshops on linguistic development

Although more than a hundred writing and reading workshops in Tu'un Savi have been held during the nearly two decades of life of the Academy, these have not been permanent nor systematic. It is necessary to recuperate the experiences and to implement them in different levels: community, schools, parishes, where children, young people and adults, men and women may participate.

4. Academic events

As a way of socializing the activities of the Academy of the Mixtec language, but also as a way of sharing experiences about teaching-learning methodologies of Tu'un Savi

and generating new frameworks of knowledge we plan to organize different events in some places of Ñuu Savi:
– Seminars
– Congresses
– Conference cycles
– Symposiums
– Literary encounters in Tu'un Savi
– Mounting of circulating expositions of Mixtec Codices

Regional Representations

At this moment there is no regional representation for each dialectal variant. Due to the lack of clarity of the project of recuperation, maintenance and development, not only of the language but of the entire culture; sometimes the commitment is forgotten. In that sense, it is urgent to create Dialectical Coordinations where some educational institutions of the Ñuu Savi operate. The proposed divisions are:

Tlapa de Comonfort, Guerrero;
Ayutla de los Libres, Guerrero;
Metlatónoc, Guerrero;
San Luis Acatlán, Guerrero;
Southern Puebla;
Huajuapan de León, Oaxaca;[10]
Jamiltepec, Oaxaca;[10]
Southern Tlaxiaco, Oaxaca;[10]
Western Tlaxiaco, Oaxaca;
Nochixtlán, Oaxaca;
Cañada de Cuicatlán, Oaxaca;
Central Valleys and the metropolitan area of Oaxaca;
Valley of México;
Isthmus, Oaxaca;
Valley of San Quintín, Ensenada and Tijuana, Baja California and
San Diego and Fresno, California, USA.

It is proposed that that the regional spaces rely upon, at minimum, an office, where at least someone takes charge of operating the projects. They should have furniture – tables, chairs – stationery, a typewriter, as well as computer equipment, a photographic camera, a video camera, an overhead projector, a slide projector, etc. This is an important element in the organization.

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[10] It is proposed that depending on the population and the territorial extension, a Subcommittee may be formed or an increment made in the number of commissions.

Furthermore, diverse activities are developed in coordination with the educational sector and other governmental institutions, aimed at fortifying the maintenance and development of Tu'un Savi.

Conclusions

Ve'e Tu'un Savi, A.C., the 'Academy of the Mixtec Language' is a space in construction and shared among those who have an interest in giving something to the culture, the language and the history, of those who speak the language as well as those who no longer speak that language anymore but identify with the Mixtec culture.

Ve'e Tu'un Savi is a space where it is possible to approach the oral and the written expression of Tu'un Savi. Nevertheless, we should not discount the necessity of having headquarters where one can organize meetings for the proposed analysis of other cultural projects of Ñuu Savi.

Making Tu'un Savi official must be based on the practice of its writing, the knowledge about it, its use and its preservation, just as the Institute of Indigenous Languages proposes (INALI 2003). The functioning of oral and written expression in our communities will make the preservation of the use of the language among the speaking and non-speaking populations possible.

As the original knowledge of Ñuu Savi (history, geography, medicine, religion, philosophy, literature, etc.) is articulated in language, Ve'e Tuún Savi, A.C. can constitute an adhesive axis for academic interests in social, legal, economic, cultural and health questions as well as for other forms of study.

Table 1 Meetings of Writers in the Mixtec Language (1990 to 1997)

Date	Place	Themes treated	Participants
Sept. 20 -23, 1990	Tlaxiaco, Oax. (Oaxacan Mixtecs).	Presentation and analysis of different alphabets. Unification of criteria to consolidate a practical alphabet.	50
March 18-20, 1991	Stgo. Jamiltepec (Oaxacan Mixtecs).	Inclusion of other graphemes to the practical alphabet. Analysis of consonant combinations. Modified vowels and the use of capital letters.	30
August 6-9,1994	Huahuapan de Leon, Oax. (Mixtecs of Puebla, Guerrero and Oaxaca are incorporated).	Consolidation of the basic alphabet. Participation of speakers on the themes: Sintax and tones in the Mixtec language. Proposal of the creation of the Academy of the Mixtec Language.	120
Dec. 19-21, 1995	Xayacatlán de Bravo, Pue. (Mixtecs from Puebla, Guerrero and Oaxaca particípate).	Analysis of grammatical structure. Organization of conferences on the themes: Verbs, pronouns and tones of the Mixtec language. Discussion of the project for the creation of the Academy of the Mixtec Language.	140
July 26-28, 1996	Ayutla de los libres, Guerrero (Mixtecs Guerrero, Puebla and Oaxaca particípate).	Central themes were approached: methodology of teaching of Mixtec. Discussion and definition of some basic concepts: Ñuu Savi for the historical territory; Ve'e Tu'un Savi to designate the Academy; Ndusu Tuún Savi for the alphabet of the language; ñani for brother ku'va for sister, etc. Agreements for the creation of Ve'e Tu'un Savi "Academy of the Mixtec Language" whose headquarters are in the City of Tlaxiaco, Oax. Naming of the commission for elaborating the statutes of the academy.	165
March 28-30, 1997	Tlaxiaco, Oax. (Mixtecs from Puebla, Guerreo and Oax. participate).	Revision and consolidation of the practical alphabet of the language. Analysis of orthographic rules. Minimal agreements about the use of high, medium and low tones in the writing. Also the decision is made not to divide words by syllables when writing in tu'un savi. Discussion about the pronouns. Revision and approval of the Statutes of Ve'e Tu'un Savi. Appointment of the Collective Directorate of Ve'e Tu'un Savi "Academy of the Mixtec Language".	250

Table 2 Ve'e Tu'un Savi "Academy of the Mixtec Language" (From March 1997 on)

Date	Place	Theme	Participants
April 13-15, 1998	Tlaxiaco, Oax.	Presentation of conferences related to Mixtec culture. Analysis and discussion of advances in the study of the phonology and morphology of Tu'un Savi. Discussion and approval of the proposed norms of writing Tu'un Savi. Reflection about the characteristics of Tu'un Savi: nasalization, prefixes, pronouns, use of capital letters, orthographic signs and tones. Approval of additions to the statutes. Determination of the legal figure of Ve'e Tu'un Savi. Establishment of 13 dialectal regions for better attention at the seminars and workshops in reading and writing in the Mixtec language.	215
March 29-31, 1999	Tlapa de Comonfort	Continuation of the phonological and morphological analysis of Tu'un Savi. Application of proposed norms for the exercise of writing in Tu'un Savi. Beginning of the analysis of other aspects of the grammar of the language. Analysis and discussion of the Report of The First Congress for eventual publication.	173
Dec. 20-22, 1999	Tlaxiaco, Oax.	Conferences on the themes of: a) Verbs and their semantic classification; b) The number system in Tu'un Savi; c) Classification of words and d) Ethno linguistics and the development project for the Mixtec language.	215
Dec. 22-23, 2000	San Jerónimo Xayacatlan, Pue. (Mixtecs from Guerrero, Puebla,Oaxaca. & Tijuana participated	Discussión and analysis of the "Norm for writing in Tu'un Savi ". Word classes. Grammatical categories. Pronouns, dependent and independent markers. Verb conjugations.	173

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Ubaldo López García

Sa'vi, el lenguaje ceremonial

Antes de hablar exclusivamente del *Sa'vi* o 'lenguaje ceremonial mixteca', quiero aclarar que este trabajo de investigación se llevó a cabo en el pueblo de Yutsa To'on, comunidad que forma parte de Ñuu Savi 'Pueblo de la Lluvia' de la región conocida como Ñuu Savi o la Mixteca. El nombre actual de Yutsa To'on es Santiago Apoala, y pertenece al distrito de Nochixtlán, Estado de Oaxaca, México. En esta área lingüística se habla Tu'un Savi 'palabra de la lluvia' – el término *tu'un* significa tanto 'palabra' y 'habla', como 'lengua' e 'historia'. Esta forma de referir a nuestra lengua es una convención generalizada. Localmente, en la variante dialectal de Yutsa To'on decimos *To'on Ñuu Davi*. *To'on* es 'palabra'. [1] *Ñuu* significa 'pueblo' y *Davi* 'lluvia'. [2] El conjunto se traduce como: 'Palabra del pueblo de la lluvia', es decir 'lengua mixteca'. Es a esta variante de Apoala que se hará referencia en este trabajo. No obstante, es importante subrayar que se respetan las variantes lingüísticas regionales y, por lo tanto, hay que reconocer que existen otras formas para decir 'palabra'. La palabra *Savi*, 'lluvia', es el vocablo acuñada por la Academia y eso se está generalizando y se respeta, pero también se usa *davi* por la variante de estudio.

En segundo lugar tenemos el término *Dadavi*, formada de dos palabras: *da* es una contracción de *da'an* [3] 'lengua o idioma', y *davi* es 'lluvia'. Se traduce como 'lengua o idioma de la lluvia'. La frase completa debe ser: *Da'an Ñuu Davi*, 'Lengua o Idioma del Pueblo de la Lluvia'. Usamos la expresión *da'an enka ñuu*, 'lengua o idioma de otro pueblo', para referirse a lenguas extranjeras o lenguas ajenas a la nuestra. En el pueblo vecino de Santa María Apazco, tienen un agregado y dicen: *Daidavi*, según esta forma de decir o designar la lengua, la *i* de *Dai* puede indicar 'sagrada (o)'; de modo que se traduciría como: 'Lengua o idioma sagrada del pueblo de la lluvia'. Esta es la forma respetuosa y ceremonial de definir la lengua o idioma, del pueblo Ñuu Savi.

En tercer lugar está la forma verbal *ka'an* 'habla' – podemos decir *ka'an da'an Ñuu*

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[1] *To'on* es un sustantivo y quiere decir palabra; y con tonos bajos y altos pasa a ser un verbo: *to'on* con tono bajo quiere decir 'arranca' y *tó'on* con tono alto quiere decir 'arrancó'. En otras variantes se dice *Tu'un*.

[2] En la variante de Apoala es *Davi*, pero se usará simultáneamente *Savi* por disciplinarse a los acuerdos de Ve'e Tu'un Savi, 'Academia de la Lengua Mixteca'**.**

[3] En la variante de Apoala es *da'an*, que corresponde a *sa'an* o *se'en* en otras variantes.

Davi 'habla el idioma del pueblo de la lluvia'. Está en tercera persona, ya que no hay verbos en infinitivo. De paso observo que las traducciones en infinitivo solo se dan cuando van dos verbos juntos (perífrasis verbal), por ejemplo: *kua'an kaxi*, 've a comer'; 'anda ve a comer'.

Así tenemos *To'on*, 'palabra', *Da'an* 'lengua o idioma'; y el verbo *ka'an*, 'habla', que son tres formas de conceptualizar la comunicación en la propia lengua.

Cabe recordar que nuestra lengua ha sido y es oral y que a la fecha no existe un análisis detallado. En este sentido, es preciso que quienes hablamos la lengua llevemos a cabo estudios sistemáticos que den cuenta de la forma de hablar, así como para conocer la gramática. Dado que hasta ahora son extranjeros quienes han realizado este tipo de análisis y que a nosotros poco o nada nos ha interesado, se ha calificado de ágrafas a las lenguas no escritas, entre de ellas el Tu'un Savi. No obstante, mediante la escritura de nuestra lengua con el alfabeto latino será posible conocer y evidenciar la riqueza gramatical que encierra ésta de tal manera que llegaremos a saber que es igual que las otras lenguas del mundo. Más adelante describiré los diferentes usos de ésta.

Lenguaje cotidiano

Teniendo claro el concepto de palabra, lengua y habla, ahora veremos que estos tienen dos momentos de uso en la vida de los Ñuu Savi. Al primero se le ha denominado 'lengua coloquial' pues es la de dominio público utilizada cotidianamente en los saludos, en la educación, en la transmisión de conocimientos, en el diálogo familiar y social, en el comercio dentro de la comunidad o con los pueblos circunvecinos (véase Tabla 1).

El estudio de esta lengua en su uso cotidiano revela la riqueza de su sintaxis y pone de manifiesto una considerable jerarquización / clasificación en su sistema pronominal. Para el caso de Apoala se han encontrado 23 pronombres diferentes: 6 para la primera persona del singular, 7 para la segunda, 8 para la tercera, 2 para la primera persona del plural. En otras variantes – las cuales aún no han sido analizadas por los propios hablantes – existen no menos de quince. Esto es un ejemplo de la riqueza gramatical de la lengua. Además, la diversidad de los pronombres marca la jerarquía social: cada uno de ellos reconoce el estatus propio y el de su interlocutor. Es decir, cuando una persona utiliza cualquiera de ellos, va indicando si es mayor, menor de la misma edad que la persona hablando. De esta forma la lengua refleja la jerarquía social, la cual corresponde con una regla de respeto que un *ñani / ku'wa ñuu savi*, 'hermano/a mixteco/a', deben seguir.[4] Por esta razón resulta muy difícil tratar de 'tú' a cualquier persona, ya que la lengua restringe igualarse con los otros. Se requiere tiempo para poder entrar en confianza directa, y más aún cuando la persona no pertenece a la cultura.

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[4] *Ñani* quiere decir 'hermano' entre hombres, *ku'wa* es hermana de un hombre. Ambos son términos de parentesco y no religiosos.

Table 1. Sistemas pronominales del Mixteco de Apoala

Pronombres	Pronombres y marcadores pronominales	Depen-dientes	Indepen-dientes	Niños	Niñas	Hom-bres	Mujeres	Marca-dores de respeto	Pronombres afirmativos e indicativos
yo	Dan		dan	X	X	X	X	X	
yo	Ntsu'u		ntsu'u	X	X	X	X		
yo	mentsu	-ntsu		X		X			divintsu
yo	mende	-nde			X		X		divinde
yo	mendi	-ndi			X		X		divindi
yo	meda	-da		X	X	X	X	X	divida
tú	nchia		nchia		X		X		
tú	ncha		ncha		X		X		
ud.	dini		dini	X	X	X	X	X	
tú	yo'o		yo'o	X		X			
ud.	meni	-ni		X	X	X	X	X	divini
tú	meyo	-yo		X		X			diviyo
tú	menda	-nda			X		X		divinda
él	metsa	-tsa		X		X			divitsa
él / ella	mechi	-chi			X		X		divichi
él / ella	menu	-nu		X		X			divinu
él / ella	meña	-ña		X	X	X	X	X	diviña
él / ella	meya	-ya		X	X	X	X	X	diviya
él(animal)	mete	-te		X	X	X	X		divite
él	me		me	X	X	X	X		divi me
él (objeto)	mexi	-xi		X	X	X	X	X	divixi
nosotros	ntso		ntso	X	X	X	X	X	
nosotros	mendo	-ndo		X	X	X	X	X	divindo

Lenguaje ceremonial

El segundo uso de la lengua puede ser denominado 'lenguaje sagrado' o 'lenguaje ce-remonial', como su propio nombre lo indica. Se trata de un lenguaje especializado que hablan los *Tanisa'nu*, 'señores principales o caracterizados', y que es empleado en di-ferentes ceremonias realizadas en la comunidad. Esta forma de hablar tiene un estilo y una estructura propias, con sus propias formas de elaborar o variar el discurso, según la habilidad del orador.

Antes de entrar a hablar del uso del discurso en las ceremonias, voy a describir y definir esta palabra de acuerdo con el dadavi, 'lengua mixteca', que se habla en Yutsa To'on 'Apoala' (véase Tabla 2).

Table 2. Traducción de Sa'vi

Dadavi	Español
Sa'vi	Inicia la palabra bonita
Sa'vi	Inicia la palabra sagrada
Sa'vi	Principia la palabra bonita
Sa'vi	Principia la palabra sagrada
Sa'vi	Empieza la palabra bonita
Sa'vi	Empieza la palabra sagrada
Sa'vi	Comienza la palabra bonita
Sa'vi	Comienza la palabra sagrada

Este 'lenguaje formal o ceremonial' se llama *Sa'vi*. En otras variantes dialectales se dice: *xa'vi, ja'vi, xa'u, tsa'vi*, o *ya'vi*. Fray Francisco de Alvarado, refiriéndose a esta misma forma de discurso, la de los señores grandes del área de Teposcolula, transcribe este término como *sahu*, por ejemplo en su traducción de 'sermón', '*catnu sahu, sahu tachi*' (Alvarado 1962: 189). Tanto el Sa'vi que se habló antes como el que se habla ahora, comprende un sentido ceremonial y de respeto. Por esta razón los oyentes escuchan con muchísima atención**,** guardando un silencio total, para no perturbar al orador, es decir, dejando que exponga todas sus ideas, ya que su elocución es deleitable, el mensaje es impactante y está dirigido para el bienestar de todos los presentes.

El Sa'vi 'lenguaje sagrado', 'lenguaje formal' o 'lenguaje ceremonial', se caracteriza por su uso en las diferentes ceremonias, y por sus contenidos metafóricos, históricos, científicos y filosóficos de la cultura Ñuu Savi. Esta es la forma de hablar presente en las escenas de los códices. Aunque en la actualidad ya no hay quienes sepan leer por tradición esos libros antiguos, el Sa'vi rememora y recrea pasajes de esas pinturas, donde el hablante en su oratoria evoca los hechos por medio de este lenguaje especializado.

Esta es una forma de enseñar al pueblo las tradiciones, costumbres, historias, ciencias, y conceptos filosóficos. Está dirigida a las personas mayores, ya que son los que están presentes en cada uno de los actos. Son ellos quienes realmente entienden el mensaje, califican al orador e identifican al que mejor lo transmite. Con este criterio los escogen cuando les lleguen a necesitar. Por este motivo están atentos, no sólo para deleitarse con el mensaje, sino para aprender y así en caso de llegar a ocupar algún cargo logren desempeñarlo de la mejor forma. Los niños no lo entienden, y en consecuencia pasan el rato jugando o si están con sus padres, deben permanecer callados, para permitir escuchar el mensaje.

Construcción del Lenguaje Sagrado

Para construir el Sa'vi, los oradores ocupan pares de palabras o frases, sean opuestas y contrastivas o sinónimas y complementarias. De éstas ya están preestablecidas algunas; otras las va construyendo el orador durante su elocución, de modo que el arte de esta oratoria radica en buscar palabras que transmiten ideas contrastantes o continuativas. A

la vez, esta clase de discurso llevado a cabo por los ancianos va recordando historias que les dejaron sus antepasados, aunadas a las experiencias de ellos mismos.

La abundancia de paralelismos y difrasismos es lo primero que distingue el Sa'vi del lenguaje común o cotidiano. En esta particularidad radica la dificultad de cualquier hablante de la lengua que no tiene la capacidad de usar el Sa'vi amén de que la practique. Debido a esta composición estructural se presentan muchos juegos de palabras, que artísticamente brotan del pensamiento del Tanisa'nu: pares que pueden conjugarse y combinarse formando muchas pares diferentes, además de las que pueda inventar el orador con su ingenio creativo. La dinámica de esta oralidad sucede como con los colores primarios, pues con pocos el pintor crea gran cantidad de mezclas. Aquí depende de la habilidad del orador, quien va multiplicando las combinaciones durante la presentación. Todo estriba en la imaginación y arte de hablar de cada persona a la hora de su discurso, para expresar lo más lúcido, brillante y florido de su pensamiento, con metáforas y parábolas: esto es lo que hace elegante esta forma de hablar.

La forma de construir el discurso ceremonial en Tu'un Savi, tiene semejanza con la elaboración del lenguaje ritual de otras culturas, como es el caso entre los kunas de Panamá. En relación con esto, Sherzer habla sobre paralelismos sintácticos y semánticos, además registra el sistema formal e informal, elaborado y limitado, directo e indirecto, cortés y descortés. No obstante, él mismo reconoce que no han sido explorados suficientemente para explicar su complejidad (Sherzer 1992: 22), tal y como sucede con el lenguaje ceremonial hasta aquí expuesto.

Estructura en pares

Veamos ahora algunos de los muchos pares que existen, los cuales se encontraron en el cuerpo de los discursos que he grabado y analizado durante los años pasados. Algunos pares encierran una dicotomía, por ejemplo: *xika, yachi*. Aquí *xika*, 'lejos', es una palabra opuesta a *yachi* 'cerca'. Otras combinaciones son reiterativas como *xido, tavi*, en que xido es 'carga', y *tavi* 'cubre'. También hay expresiones continuativas como *xika, xino*, en que *xika* es 'camina' y *xino* 'corre, huye', cuya combinación se traduce como: 'camina y corre', 'camina a escondidas', 'anda, escondiéndose', 'anda, huyendo'. Estas cuatro traducciones de una sola expresión demuestran que hay muchas formas de traducir una frase o verso. Todo depende de las circunstancias; no es rígida la presentación sino al contrario, es bastante flexible y abierta.

Los pares pueden ser concordantes o discordantes, y pueden variar en significado, según el contexto y dependiendo de la palabra que le antecede o que va después, es decir, que puede dar un concepto simple o algo más profundo como puede ser la representación de un hecho sagrado. Por ejemplo la expresión *dawa tsie, dawa ñade'e*, que literalmente significa 'medio hombre, medio mujer' o 'mitad hombre, mitad mujer', se aplica tanto al hombre como a la mujer, reconociendo, valorando y admirando al hombre o la mujer por su grandeza moral, por su espíritu fuerte o su sensibilidad, ya que sin importar el sexo es capaz de realizar trabajos materiales o manuales, también los que

tradicionalmente se consideran propios del sexo opuesto. Vale la pena aclarar que tales expresiones no tienen que ver con homosexuales o bisexuales, como se pudiera interpretar en la otra cultura. Así sucede con los demás casos, en donde según el contexto en que se encuentren se puede prestar para metaforizar y filosofar.

Los pares pueden ser verbos con verbos, sustantivos con sustantivos, frases con frases u otras formas gramaticales. El caso es que las metáforas, paralelismos, difrasismos, repeticiones, catacresis, siempre estarán presentes en los discursos que se pronuncian en los diferentes momentos del acto ceremonial (véase Tabla 3).

Lo antes expuesto demuestra que el Sa'vi es un lenguaje con estructura poética, que refleja un profundo pensamiento social y religioso.El *tse ka'an sa'vi*, 'persona que habla el lenguaje ceremonial' expresa tanto conceptos ideológicos y cosmológicos como principios éticos y filosóficos. La forma elegante de hablar y de hacer interesante la disertación, depende mucho de la agilidad mental, de los conocimientos adquiridos y la facilidad de palabra. El orador construye con sus ideas juegos de palabras, las cuales impresionan y conmueven a los oyentes. Es esta habilidad que distingue a un buen Tanisa'nu como hombre sabio y conocedor de su cultura que habla el discurso ceremonial.

El lenguaje está reservado a un grupo de personas especializadas dentro de la comunidad, conformado regularmente por ancianos que han desempeñado cargos sociales, comunales, municipales y eclesiásticos. En particular los cargos medio y superior en el Ayuntamiento y el principal en la iglesia, o bien lo que Leif Korsback (1996) llama sistemas de cargos político – religiosos, requieren de una persona con conocimiento experto y especializado del lenguaje sagrado, ya que éste es una parte imprescindible de tales actividades.

El Sa'vi es pues el lenguaje con que los *Tanisa'nu*, 'Señores grandes', se comunican con los *Ñú'u*, 'dioses'. Me atrevo a hacer esta traducción, debido a que en casi todas las variantes decimos *Veñú'u* compuesta por dos palabras: *Ve'e*, 'casa', y *Ñú'u*, 'Dios'. Como nuestra lengua es tonal, la palabra *ñu'u* con diferentes tonos tiene otro significado. Por ejemplo: *Ñu'u* (con tono medio) es ' tierra', *Ñu'u* (con tono bajo en la última u) ' lumbre', *Ñú'u* (con tono alto en la primera u) 'Dios'.

A continuación veremos evidencias que pueden ilustrarnos acerca del significado de estas palabras:

Ka'an Ñú'u significa 'habla Dios' (*ka'an*, 'habla'; *Ñú'u*, 'Dios'). Así es como se dice cuando cae un trueno y cuando caen con más constancia se dice: *Ntse'e ka'an Ñú'u*, 'mucho o muy frecuente habla Dios'. Aquí observamos que hay un adverbio de cantidad más verbo y sustantivo; esta expresión se utiliza cuando el trueno es frecuente y tan fuerte que retumba. Cuando el trueno es aún más fuerte se dice: *Ka'an deen Ñú'u*, 'habla enojado Dios' (*ka'an*, 'habla'; *deen*, 'enojado'; *Ñú'u*, 'Dios'). La estructura de esta última frase es: verbo + adverbio + sustantivo.

Table 3. Estructura en pares del Sa'vi, lenguaje sagrado

Andu on, andu ña'a	Quién sí, quién no
Amika ni'i, amika kixi	A dónde conseguiré, de dónde vendrá
Ami ki'inndo, ami kuntsakando	A dónde vamos, a dónde llevaremos
Ami io, ami atu	Donde hay, donde no hay
Ami kada, ami ma kada	Donde se puede, donde no se puede
Ami kachi, ami nda'wa	Donde alumbra, donde se apaga
Ami ntsaa, ami katuu	Ya parado, ya tirado
Ami kata, ami u'u	Donde da comezón, donde duele
Ami kana, ami nda'wa	Donde brota, donde se apaga (muere) * 1
Ami nchito, ami xi'i	Ya vivo, ya muerto
Ami na'a, ami dana	Donde se ve, donde no se ve (borrado)
Ami kui, ami yichi	Ya verde, ya seco
Amika ko, amika kana	Donde va a estar, donde va a brotar
Atuka, nde'e	Yo no hay, ya se acabó
Ayu, a'na	A carne, a unto (se refiere a olor)
Davi, ntsa'yu	Lluvia, lodoso (ya entre lluvia o entre el lodo)
Da'a wa'a, da'a u'u	Hijo bueno, hijo malo
Dawa tsie, dawa ñade'e	Mitad hombre, mitad mujer *
Daye'e ndu, daye'e niñu	Alumbra de día, alumbra de noche
Da'a yee, da'a de'e	Hijo hombre, hija mujer
Da'a ya'a, da'a yukua	Hijo este, hijo aquel
Da'ani ja'a, da'ani jukua	Hijo aquí, hijo allá
Dini, dini	Lo mismo, lo mismo
Du'wani kua'an, du'wani vaxi	Así fue, así vino
Da'a, da'ani	Hijo e hijo (hijo tras hijo)
En tse tata adi en ña tata	Un curandero o una curandera
En tata, en nana	Un padre, una madre
En tsie, en ñade'e	Un hombre, una mujer
En didi, en dito	Una tía, un tío
En ñani, en ta'an	Un hermano, un sobrino (un familiar)
En ñani, en ku'wa	Un hermano, una hermana
Eta'a nchidoña'a, eta'a ñu'uña'a	Un poco cargando, un poco arrastrando
Eta'a chinda'a, eta'a chisa'a	Un poco empujando, un poco pateando
En lus, espiritu santu	Una luz, un espíritu santo
Entsa xi'in entsa	Uno y otro
En xi'in en	Uno y uno
Enndo xi'in enndo	Unos con otros
Iku, kandu	Ayer, anteayer (antier)
Icha'a, ichukua	Por acá, por allá
Ichi ya'a, ichi yukua	Camino este, camino aquel
Ichi sa'axi, ichi jdikixi	Camino hacia el pie, camino hacia la cabeza
Io sa kada, io sa ma kada	Hay cosas posibles, hay cosas no posibles

Ja'a, jukua
Jaja, jajani
Ja'ani, jukuani

Kana ka'an, kana kachi
Ka xi'in, ka du'wa
Keduxiña'a, kuntsadiña'á
Kida kui'ia, kida kini
Kida nda'vi, kida du'wa
Konchi, kondu'wa
Kua, naa
Kua'an, vaxi
Kuxi, kuxitando
Kutatando, kunanando
Ki kua'an, ki vaxi
Ku nchido, ku doko
Kune'e, ku nchido tavi
Kusa noo, ku kenoo
Kua'a ini, kua'a kuni
Kuta'vi, ndu ii
Ku yee, ku ni'i
Kida ka'nu, kida duku
Kida nachi, kida ii
Kunu'u, kundixi
Kua'an, vaxi

Na keduxiña'a, na taviña'a
Nakuatu, nakana
Ndada ii, ndada nachi
Ndaxindodo, saña'a
Naton, naye'e
Nakunchidotaviña'a, nakutaviña'a

Ño'o nchitsa, ño'o doko
Ñuma kuan, ñuma kuixi

Sa na'a, sa yichi
Sa va'a, sa diko
Sa u'u, sa nda'vi
Sto'on tsie, sto'on ñade'e
Sa ki'inndo ku sa ki'inndo

To'on va'a, to'on diko
To'on kanuini, to'on wa'a
Tse kachi on, tse kachi ña'a
Tu koko, tu yadi
Tu kue'e, tu du'wa
Tu saa, tu ma saa
Tu saando, tu ma saando
Tu va'a, tu u'u

Este, aquel
Aquí, aquí nomás
Aquí nomás, aya nomás

Habló de repente, habló diciendo
Mal escurrido, mal hecho
Lo cubrirá (abrazando), lo cuidará
Hizo suciedad, hizo marranada
Hizo pobre, hizo como quiera
Se resbala, se cae
No se ve (ciego), está oscuro
Se fue, se vino (revuelto por acá, por allá)
Nuestro abuelo, nuestra abuela
Nuestro padre, nuestra madre
Días van, días vienen
Lo va a cargar, lo va a llevar al hombre
Lo va a llevar, se lo va a cubrir
Se fue para arriba, se fue para abajo
Mucho corazón, mucha paciencia
Se consagra, se vuelve sagrado   * 2
Se es hombre, se es fuerte (valiente)
Lo hizo grande, lo elevó (lo hizo alto, lo consa-
gró)
Lo hizo delicado, lo hizo sagrado
Va y viene /se fue, se vino
Se fue, se vino

Que lo guarde (abrazando), que lo cubra
Reza, implora (llama, pide)
Lo vuelve sagrado, lo vuelve delicado
Lo hereda, lo da
Alumbra, aclara
Lo lleva cubriendo (encima), lo lleva cubierto

Va hambriento, va sediento
Cera amarilla, cera blanca

Maldad, flaqueza
El bien, la felicidad (lo que es o va a ser)
El dolor, el sufrimiento
Palabra de hombre, palabra de mujer
De que vamos, vamos a ir

Palabras buenas, palabras sagradas
Palabras de corazón, palabras buenas
Quienes dirán sí, quienes dirán no
Ya grueso, ya delgado
Lo malo, lo vano
Si llega o no llega
Si llegamos o no llegamos

Sa'vi, el lenguaje ceremonial

Tu i'ni, tu vixi	Ya sea bien, ya sea mal
Tu kaa, tu noo	Ya caliente, ya frío
Tu xini, tu ti xini	Ya de subida, ya de bajada
Tu ndayu, tu visa	Si sabe o no sabe
Tu katu, tu ma katu	Ya rasposo, ya liso
Tu chi'yo, ña ti chi'yo	Sea que truene o que no truene
Tu ve, tu kama	Ya sea que se cueza o no se cueza
Tu xika, tu yachi	Ya liviano, ya pesado
Tu yakui, ña ti yakui	Ya sea lejos, ya sea cerca
Tu duku, tu nu'u	Ya sea aguantador, ya sea débil
Tu da'a yee, tu da'a de'e	Ya sea alto, ya sea bajo
Tu kunu'u, tu kundixi	Ya sea hijo hombre, ya sea hija mujer
Tu di, tu adi	Sea que se fue, sea que regresó
Tu davi, tu ntsa'yu	Qué es, o qué no es
Tu ndu, tu niñu	Ya con lluvia, ya con lodo
Tu ka'ndi, tu ma ka'ndi	Ya de día, ya de noche
Tu ka'nu, tu lin	Sea que reviente, o que no reviente
Tu duku, tu tu un'u	Ya sea grande, ya sea chico
Tu koko, tu kuiñi	Ya sea alto, ya sea bajo
Tu vee, tu kama	Ya sea delgado o grueso
Tu nuna ña ntsadi	Ya pesado, ya liviano
Tu kuntse ña ma kuntse	Ya abierto, ya cerrado
Tu na kuita, ña nani'i	Ya sea que aguante, ya sea que no aguante
Tse xini tuni, tse ti xini tuni	Aunque se pierda o que se encuentre
	El que adivina, el no que no adivina
Tu kachi kundo, tu ma kachi kundo	(el que conoce, el que no conoce)
	Ya sea que podamos, ya sea que no podamos
Xika, yachi	
Xido, tavi	Lejos, cerca
Xika, xino	Carga, cubre
	Corre, se esconde
Vaxi, ndaxindodo	
	Viene, heredándose
Yu ii, yu du'wa	
	Piedra sagrada, piedra cualquiera
Wa'ani tu tsie, wa'ani tu ñade'e	
Wa'ani tu di'na, wa'ni tu dandu	Bien si es hombre, bien si es mujer
Wa'a, wa'ani	Bien si es primero, bien si es después
	Bien, bien

Estos contextos son sumamente explícitos, por lo tanto quien habla la lengua no se confunde entre trueno y relámpago. El trueno se asocia con lo de arriba y al relámpago se le llama *saa ndutsa*, donde *saa* significa florea y es equivalente a estrellarse o fisurase; *ndutsa* es agua. De esta forma relámpago se traduce como: 'se estrella el agua', y lógicamente se trata de agua de lluvia. A diferencia de este fenómeno, cuando la lluvia se convierte en aguacero, tormenta o huracán, recibe el nombre de *Ko Ndutsa*, que significa 'culebra de agua' (*ko*, 'culebra'; *ndutsa*, 'agua'). En este sentido, tenemos nombres para cada elemento que conforma nuestro universo.

Otro de muchos posibles ejemplos es *Kaxi Ñú'u*, 'va a comer Dios' (*Kaxi*, 'comerá o va a comer'; *Ñú'u,* 'Dios'). La estructura es verbo + sustantivo. Esta frase refiere al acto de alimentar al *Ñú'u* depositando o cavando un hoyo en la tierra, donde posteriormente se colocan siete ofrendas. El tipo de ofrenda puede variar desde tortillas redondas y pequeñas hasta cigarros, chocolates, copas, carne, etc. El nombre que se le da a esta acción de ofrendar es *Viko Dakaxi Ñú'u*, 'Fiesta de dar de comer a Dios'.

En otro caso *Ñú'u,*'Dios' se sustituye por *Ñu'u*, 'tierra', aunque ambos en la cosmovisión mixteca están íntimamente relacionados. *Kaxi Ñu'u*, que se traduce 'come tierra'(*Kaxi*, 'come'; *Ñu'u* 'tierra') se utiliza para ordenar a alguien que coma tierra, especialmente cuando un niño se cae y se asusta. De no llevarse esto a cabo, la persona corre el riesgo de que su espíritu se quede en el lugar y por consiguiente al poco tiempo se enferme. Si llegara a enfermarse el curandero necesita una serie de ofrendas para sanarlo. Vale la pena subrayar que dicha curación implica reconocer el poder del sitio sagrado o del lugar 'pesado'. Hace mucho tiempo escuché la siguiente frase de un respetable anciano cn referencia a la tierra: *Ñu'u dako'o, dakaya'an kundo ñuyi ya'a*, 'la tierra nos da de beber,[5] y nos da de comer a nosotros en este mundo'.

Los Ñuu Savi conceptualizamos al mundo como *Ñuyi*, compuesto de *Ñu*, 'pueblo', 'lugar', y *yi*, 'gente' (contracción de *ñayi*), 'lugar de gente'. Metafóricamente diríamos 'pueblo de seres vivos', ya que todo lo que existe tiene vida. Por ejemplo, una piedra, una taza u otro objeto, tienen cara, boca, asiento y tienen vida mientras sirven. Sin embargo, cuando se quiebra o se destruye, se dice que ha muerto puesto que ya no tiene utilidad. En nuestra cosmovisión las cosas tienen vida porque tiene cuerpo y como tal se nombra cada una de sus partes (cabeza, pies, cara, corazón, asiento, vientre o panza). Las cuatro direcciones del mundo se describen de acuerdo a la posición del sol:

– *Ichi kana Chicanchi*, 'camino por donde sale o brota el sol' (oriente),
– *Ichi kee Chikanchi*, 'camino por donde se mete el sol' (poniente);
– *Ichi Jdiki Ñuyi*, 'camino por donde está la cabeza del mundo' (norte);
– *Ichi Sa'a Ñuyi*, 'camino hacia el pie del mundo' (sur) (López García 2001: 290).

Además, existen expresiones como *jdikixi na ko ichi andivi*, que signfica: que su cabeza quede hacia arriba o hacia el cielo; o bien *kakini jnuxi ichi kana chikanchi*, que quiere decir: póngale la cara (a una piedra por ejemplo) por donde sale el sol. Esto último viene de *ichi andivi* (camino hacia el cielo o hacia arriba).

La importancia literaria del discurso ceremonial

El lenguaje ceremonial mixteco, hasta ahora no ha sido tema de investigación pormenorizada. Algunos autores han estudiado fenómenos similares en otras lenguas de Mesoamérica pero no con detenimiento. He revisado por ejemplo, el trabajo de María Teresa

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[5] Se refiere a la bebida natural como: agua, atole, tepache, pulque, miel, jugo de caña, a cualquier líquido natural y no a bebidas embriagantes industriales.

Sierra Camacho (1987) sobre discursos usados en asambleas comunitarias entre los Ñahñu, 'otomí' del Valle del Mezquital. No obstante, se trata más bien de un lenguaje cotidiano y no del ceremonial como en el caso del Sa'vi. El análisis de Sierra Camacho versa sobre el ejercicio discursivo de la autoridad y sobre todo en las interacciones que se llevan a cabo durante las reuniones.

Por su parte, Martín Gómez Ramírez ha estudiado a los tzeltales de los Altos de Chiapas y muy particularmente al pueblo de Oxchuc. Este investigador hace una serie de descripciones acerca del uso del discurso y los presenta en versos. Sin embargo, no hace un análisis del contenido, ni de la estructura (Gómez 1991:93; 1999:164).

El trabajo sobre la lengua de los chamulas de Chiapas, realizado por Gary Gossen, también consiste en registros de discursos en forma de versos. Asimismo, hace un análisis sintáctico de los mismos (Gossen 1989:207-241; cf. Vogt 1993:24), pero su enfoque tiene las mismas carencias que el de Gómez.

Con el propósito de encontrar una perspectiva teórica para entender el funcionamiento, la estructura y el contenido del Sa'vi, consulté los trabajos de Carlos Montemayor (1996, 2001). El autor ha estudiado la literatura de otros pueblos, particularmente los rezos sacerdotales mayas. De acuerdo a su composición, Montemayor los llama arte, y por la musicalización de algunos de ellos en las ceremonias agrícolas, los denomina rezos y cantos. En otro momento los llama arte y plegaria, es ahí donde analiza con mayor detenimiento las formas artísticas de las composiciones de las lenguas indígenas de México y dice:

> Estamos ante un arte distinto del verbo que nos exige distanciarnos de nuestros moldes y modelos contemporáneos y plantear los principios del ritmo o de la medida con referentes más amplios, quizás de otros periodos y de otros valores sonoros de las lenguas occidentales (Montemayor 2001:12).

Aquí el autor reconoce que los estudios profundos y analíticos de las lenguas indígenas requieren de una atención especial y no buscar una cuadratura ya establecida. Esto resulta indispensable para comprender la lenguas habladas por otras culturas. Indudablemente lo mismo tenemos que tener en mente al analizar y definir la estructura y contenido del Sa'vi.

En principio, me he referido al Sa'vi como 'discurso formal o ceremonial', puesto que se practica únicamente en las fiestas o ceremonias, donde hay una interacción cara a cara y se habla de la interacción social en la vida cotidiana (Berger y Luckmann 1997:46). Esta forma de relación y actuación es semejante a la que registra Allan F. Burns entre los mayas. En relación a esto menciona que 'La literatura oral de los mayas de Yucatán surge de la conversación y exige una segunda persona que escuche y responda al discurso durante su desarrollo' (Burns 1995:14). Además, tomemos en cuenta al público presente que, aunque no intervienen hablando sí validan lo que en ese momento se dice. Por otro lado, el investigador reconoce con ciertas reservas que 'El mejor modo de entender la literatura oral maya yucateca es como forma poética de narración en la que la interpretación es una característica dominante' (Burns 1995:17).

Esto quiere decir, que para encontrar el significado de la estructura de los versos, se necesita estudiar la lengua desde el punto de vista literario apoyándose en otras disciplinas. El discurso lleva un orden, no es arbitrario, tiene una norma interna, ocupa las riquezas formales de la lengua y expresa la experiencia colectiva d el pueblo (cf. van Dijk 2001:171).

Estas complejas formas de hablar, comprenden una gran variedad de pensamientos debidamente estructurados donde el hablante idealiza todo lo que trae en mente para persuadir al oyente o destinatario. Esta riqueza se manifiesta en lo florido de la expresión, que es el reflejo del amplio repertorio que porta el discursante y que, de manera espontánea, interacciona con su público, haciendo que la lengua cumpla diversas funciones.

Por las razones expuestas hasta aquí, resulta difícil cuadrar esta forma de hablar al estilo de los poemas, discursos o retóricas occidentales. Es más prudente registrarlas para estudios analíticos y estructurales en el futuro.

Estudiando esta forma de hablar, he llegado a comprender que los oradores_transmiten más conocimientos de lo que los oyentes pueden percibir ya sea dentro del contexto político, social, curativo, casamiento, bautismo, u otras ceremonias. En cada uno de ellos se da una interacción directa entre dos o más personas frente a frente, hablante-oyente, donde se comunican cosas relevantes, hechos históricos, sociales y familiares. Todo ello con un sentido coherente, donde el orador juega con una estructura preestablecida y combinada en el instante, o mediante creaciones de neologismos. El orden de su desarrollo, como cualquier otra presentación ceremonial y discursiva, tiene una introducción, un cuerpo donde expone todo el pensamiento o motivo de la ceremonia y un final donde agradece a los presentes y al Dios, del cual no se distingue si es el católico o uno de los dioses naturales de la tradición precolonial.

A través del lenguaje de interacción frente a frente ya mencionado, también se habla con seres que oyen pero que no pueden contestar. Esto aplica en el caso de los espacios sagrados, especialmente con la madre tierra, ya sea para sembrar o por la cosecha recibida. Lo mismo sucede cuando se pide permiso al lugar sagrado para hacer algún trabajo (casa, apertura de camino, etc.), para rescatar el espíritu de algún enfermo; o cuando se habla al Señor que cuida el monte para pedir una pieza de caza. La manera de proceder en estas cuestiones es en forma de monólogo, pidiendo y ofreciendo; estableciéndose así una connexión hombre – naturaleza, paciente – curandero; cazador – señor del monte, hombre – madre tierra, lengua – ofrenda. Después de la ceremonia de curación, el médico tradicional le habla al lugar entregándole su *Sta'vixi*, 'la ofrenda' como reconocimiento al sitio sagrado. No importa el hecho de no poder ver aquel espíritu a quien se le habla, pues se sabrá que fue aceptado cuando el enfermo haya sanado. De esta forma el curandero logra el propósito solicitado, mismo que se suma a su mérito personal en el arte de la curación.

El discurso formal es usado en diferentes ceremonias; bautizos, recepciones, mayordomías y eventos nupciales que comprende desde el pedimento, casamiento, entrega y

agradecimiento, entre otros. Es una parte prominente de la literatura oral de Ñuu Savi, rica en su contenido poético y filosófico. Cabe señalar que estas características no son exclusivas de la cultura mesoamericana, pues incluso Sherzer al estudiar el lenguaje ritual de los Kuna de Panamá nota que se trata de un 'Lenguaje especial...: está estrechamente organizado y codificado y abiertamente clasificado, sus reglas se siguen concienzudamente y es verbalmente artístico' (Sherzer 1992:23).

El ejemplo mesoamericano más conocido de una obra escrita en este lenguaje ceremonial es el Popol Vuh, libro sagrado de los k'iche', que es un gran discurso poetico e histórico sobre la creación del mundo maya, que bien puede presentarse en verso. Lo mismo sucede con la historia sagrada de los Ñuu Savi recogida por Fray Gregorio García, y que Jansen y Pérez Jiménez (2000: 65-68), reconociendo su semejanza estilística con el Popol Vuh, han puesto en forma de verso para demostrar su carácter poético.

Los antiguos códices son libros históricos, literarios y culturales, que registran conocimientos del pueblo Ñuu Savi. Al no encontrar textos escritos con el alfabeto latino investigadores extranjeros han calificaron a los pueblos mesoamericanos como ágrafas y no comprendieron los libros hechos a partir de pintura. Estudiando la estructura de sus escenas pictográficas, es evidente que fueron compuestos de acuerdo con los principios del Sa'vi.

Es importante notar que hasta hoy tales formas de transmisión rituales en las lenguas indígenas de México, se aprenden de boca a oído por un maestro que elige al discípulo pero requiere del desarrollo de la memoria y de la creatividad del nuevo rezandero (Montemayor 2001:28). Algunas de estas composiciones orales, fueron analizadas y citadas por Carlos Montemayor. De ahí que, al estudiar la literatura indígena de México, él reconoce el proceso de transmisión de estos conocimientos, es decir, de forma oral y no escrita.

Aquí nos dicen que el maestro escoge al aprendiz, sin embargo, en Apoala, el método de aprendizaje está en los diferentes cargos municipales. Allá es el espacio de estudio y memorización, allá es la escuela donde aprenden a oír y memorizar esta forma de hablar, para después ejecutarlos. A quienes ocupan cargos menores les enseñan a oír, para que cuando les toque la responsabilidad de Mayor de Vara o Síndico puedan empezar a hacer uso de este lenguaje. En caso de no poder por cuenta propia, piden ayuda a compañeros en cargo superiores o de lo contrario buscan una persona mayor del pueblo para que les enseñe el lenguaje ceremonial. No son escogidos para aprender, sino que los cargos que desempeñan los obliga a tener esta clase de aprendizaje. Lo que esto demuestra es que hay diferentes formas de aprender el lenguaje ceremonial.

La persona que enseña el lenguaje ceremonial sabe cómo se habla en los diferentes momentos, cómo dirigirse a los seres divinos (*Ñú'u*), a las autoridades, a los sitios sagrados (manantiales, vientos, cuevas, ríos, a la madre tierra, al dador de las cosechas recibidas, al sol, a la lluvia y al cuidador de los bosques).

Necesitamos estudiar las formas literarias indígenas desde la perspectiva de su propio arte de versificación, desde el universo de sus propios valores y de la permanencia de su

cultura. La 'tradición oral' en las lenguas indígenas no es_ pues, el recuerdo personal, subjetivo, aleatorio, de acontecimientos del pasado que varios ancianos conservan aun en diversas comunidades. Más bien son la enseñanza, conservación y recreación de vehículos formales, de géneros formales precisos, que constituyen un arte de la lengua, y en su elaboración formularia resguardan gran parte de su conocimiento milenario (Montemayor 2001:61).

Efectivamente, el orador a través de este lenguaje preserva la historia, las tradiciones, conocimientos y filosofía de la cultura de los antepasados, y en cada exposición hace memoria del pasado.

Conclusión

En conclusión se puede decir que Tu'un Ñuu Savi, 'palabra del pueblo de la lluvia', tiene una fuerza literaria tan importante como las demás lenguas alrededor del mundo. La ventaja de unas tal y como el español, inglés, francés, etc., es que han sido estudiadas ampliamente, se han escrito muchas obras y se han enseñando sistemáticamente en las aulas. Además, se han impuesto en diferentes ámbitos por su poder expansionista, político, educativo, económico, religioso, entre otros hechos, poniendo en desventaja a las lenguas minoritarias, relegadas a la comunicación familiar, local y regional.

Con los pocos estudios que he realizado de la oralidad de mi lengua, he encontrado que ésta posee una gran riqueza gramatical, empezando con los pronombres, lo cual obviamos sin llegar al análisis. Tampoco se ha detenido en el uso cotidiano y el especializado, como el ceremonial. Es de suma importancia para la comunidad Ñuu Savi recuperar este último, ya que es por este medio como se recuerdan hechos históricos, valores sociales e ideas filosóficas, es también el medio en que los señores grandes metaforizan la vida y su cultura.

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Hans-Jörg Witter

Koo Sau – Quetzalcoatl
Mixtec Religious Symbolism in Past and Present

Sacred texts can be characterised by two functions: a) the formative function, which answers to the question 'Who are we?', referring to the problem of identity, and b) the normative function, which answers the question 'What shall we do?' or 'What is our duty to do?', referring to the problem of ethics. The texts which we will present here are principally formative texts corresponding to the central symbol of Mixtec identity: the Plumed Serpent . I will start with a discussion of historical sources, which will help us to perceive identity and difference, continuity and discontinuity in the Mixtec tradition.[1]

The Codex Yuta Tnoho and Mixtec cosmogony

The Codex Yuta Tnoho,[2] also known as Vindobonensis, is our most important source for the vision of the ancient Mixtecs about the origin of world and humanity. It is a pictographic scripture, which tells us about the birth of Lord 9 Wind Quetzalcoatl, his descent from heaven and the creation of the Mixtec socio-political order. I will begin with the interpretative translation presented by Gabina Aurora Perez Jimenez and Maarten Jansen, written in Spanish:

> ....Año 10 Caña, día 8 Zopilote fue la fecha sagrada. Los seres del inframundo sahumaban con copal y esparcían el tabaco molido ante una Gran Piedra de Pedernal.
> Año 10 Casa, día 9 Viento fue la fecha sagrada en que de este Gran Pedernal nació el Señor 9 Viento, Quetzalcoatl.
>
> Señor Blanco de Algodón

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[1] The texts in this paper that register present-day oral tradition in the Mixtec highlands were collected during two workshops – each with the duration of one week – with the active participation of 5 to 7 Mixtecs of the parish of Chalcatongo, Oaxaca (municipalities of Chalcatongo, San Miguel el Grande, Atatlahuca and Yosonotú), all of whom were pastoral agents of the parish but also experienced in their own religious tradition and aware of their cultural identity and tradition.

[2] In referring to the ancient pictorial manuscripts I use here the names proposed by Maarten Jansen and Gabina Aurora Pérez Jiménez (2004).

Señor de Jade,
Señor de Oro,
Señor con la Orejera de Caracol y con el Sombrero cónico de piel de jaguar,
Señor con la Orejera Blanca Encorvada, con rizos largos sin peinar y con el tocado de cintas amarradas,
Señor Sacrificador que baila con una pierna humana, o sea, el Señor de poderes mágicos espantosos,
Señor Sahumado,
Señor Torcido [como el remolino],
Señor Conquistador,
Señor Guerrero,
Señor Hombre de Piedra,
Señor Incrustado que sabe palabras hermosas,
Señor de cuyo pecho brotan cantos,
Señor que escribe con la tinta roja y negra,
Señor que carga el Ñuhu [la deidad] en su pecho,
Señor que carga en su pecho el sagrado Haz de Varitas dedicado a Xipe.

Año 6 Conejo, día 7 Flor fue la fecha sagrada, que en Lugar del Cielo los venerados Ancianos, sentados sobre piedras, sobre altares, instuyeron al Señor 9 Viento
Le dieron sus atavíos de Quetzalcoatl:
El vestido ceremonial, los ornamentos de caracol y de concha para el pecho, la flecha y el lanzadardos, el ornamento de plumas negras para la nuca, el tocado cónico de piel de jaguar, la máscara bucal del dios del Viento, los brazaletes de plumones, la macana incrustada con turquesas.
Le encargaron dos lugares:
el Cerro del Sol y el Cerro del Árbol Blanco con el Cerro de la Estrella, así como cuatro cultos específicos:
el Templo del Envoltorio Sagrado
el Templo del sagrado Haz de Varitas dedicado a Xipe
el Templo del Caracol y
el Templo del Bastón de Mando ['de Venus'].
Del Lugar del Cielo bajó por una cuerda de sacrificio, una cuerda sagrada, que serpenteaba por el aire, el Señor
 9 Viento, Quetzalcoatl, ricamente ataviado.
Como Águila y Serpiente de Fuego, con poderes mágicos, vino el Señor 9 Viento del Cielo, encargado del Templo de Xipe y del Templo del Sol.
Vino empuñando un rollo de papel y cargando el Bastón del Mando.
Año 6 Conejo, día 5 Caña fue la fecha sagrada en que bajó y llegó a la tierra el Señor 9 Viento.
Con todos sus atavíos, armado y con el Templo de Xipe y el Templo del Sol, legó a las casas cercadas, a los montes y ríos, a las comunidades.
....
Año 6 Conejo, día 5 Caña fue la fecha sagrada en que el Señor 9 Viento, Quetzalcoatl, consultó con el Noble Abuelo, la Noble Abuela,con el Señor Serpiente de Coyote y el Señor

Serpiente de Jaguar.

Año 10 Casa, día 2 Lluvia fue la fecha sagrada en que el Señor 9 Viento, Quetzalcoatl, se encargó del cielo con agua. Trajo esta agua del cielo y la repartió a los ríos y montes, a las comunidades de la Mixteca.

[Así el dios Remolino inició el ciclo agrario-ritual, determinó las temporadas y las fechas sagradas de los pueblos, e hizo posible la vida de la gente y las naciones.]

The same vision is present in a text recorded in colonial times by fray Gregorio Garcia and published in his opus '*Origen de los indios del Nuevo Mundo*'. It is a brief account of creation, which, in spite of some confusion due to the translation process, offers a crucial key for the interpretation of the symbolism in Codex Yuta Tnoho:

La pareja Uno Ciervo, Padre y Madre de todos los dioses, tuvieron dos hijos varones, muy hermosos, discretos y sabios en todas las artes. El primero se llamó 'Viento de Nueve Culebras', nombre tomado del día que nació. El segundo se llamó 'Viento de Nueve Cavernas', que también era el nombre del día de su nacimiento...El mayor, cuando quería recrearse, se volvía en águila, la cual andaba volando por los altos. El segundo se transformaba en un animal pequeño, figura de serpiente, que tenía alas, con que volaba por los aires con tanta agilidad, y sutileza, que entraba por las peñas y paredes, y se hacía invisible...Tomaban estas figuras para dar a entender el poder que tenían para transformarse, y volverse a la que antes tenían... (Monjarás-Ruiz 1987: 90-91)

Interpretive comments

As we can observe in Codex Yuta Tnoho, Lord 9 Wind Quetzalcoatl plays an important part in the ancient Mixtec vision of the world and the human being. It is sufficient to read his titles in order to understand that he is representing the unification of all divine and human powers (naturals/supernaturals; wind/twister; authorised of the temple of the Sun and Xipe; carries the Ñuhu; brings us the rain etc.; richness and power: gold, jade; the baton of authority, conqueror, warrior; power of origin: man of stone; person who initiates the new fire; wisdom/science: person who knows the beautiful words, creator of the chants and a sage scribe). Indeed, he is a humanized god and a deified human being. Descending from heaven, Quetzalcoatl brings to men and women the capacity to transcend and to transform themselves and nature.

Different from the Aztec Quetzalcoatl and from the 'Legend of the Suns', the Mixtec Quetzalcoatl is first and foremost a divinity of vegetation and fertility. The focus of Codex Yuta Tnoho (Vindobonensis) in my opinion seems to be on rain, which is the celestial water given by 9 Wind to the whole Mixtec region. Obviously the Mixtec Quetzalcoatl complies with the responsibilities and functions of the rain divinity, Tlaloc (in Mixtec language: Dzavui). Therefore, until today, the Plumed Serpent is known in the Mixtec highlands as *Koo Sau*, 'Rain Serpent' – the word '*sau*' is a modern dialectical variant of the ancient term '*Dzavui*', the rain god. However, the Codex Yuta Tnoho

presents the Rain Serpent in action as the God Quetzalcoatl. This fact seems to me to imply that the rain god, Dzavui, is only a mask of the authentic divine mystery which we find in the divine-human being, the master 9 Wind Quetzalcoatl, who disposes of the powers of the Plumed Serpent.

The agrarian-ritual cycle, which is celebrated until today in Mixtec highlands, is in accordance with the concepts expressed in Codex Yuta Tnoho. The liturgical or ritual year of Mesoamerican religion centers on two dates: May 3 (the celebration of the Holy Cross, which coincides with the beginning of rainy season) and November 1 (Day of the Dead, which is the celebration of the return of deceased family members at the end of the harvest time).[3]

The cosmogony of Codex Yuta Tnoho stresses the divine-magic power of the human Quetzalcoatl as the creator of the rain and his ability to transcend his own historical destiny: 'Como Águila y Serpiente de Fuego, con poderes mágicos, vino el Señor 9 Viento Quetzalcoatl del Cielo.'

Here the text of Fray Gregorio García, mentioned above, is of great help, because, describing Lord 9 Wind as two (twin) brothers, it in fact distinguishes between his two main powers. One is the power of transformation as '*nahual*', and the other to the power of transcending the '*tona*' or human destiny determined by the day of birth. The two powers, the power of transcendence and the power of transformation, are well known in the Mixtec highlands until today: the Feathered Serpent collaborating with the celestial fire – lightening and thunder – is also a '*nahual*' of a person. And about the rattlesnake (in Spanish: *serpiente cascabel*), which refers to the serpent as destiny or '*tona*', Mixtec people tell the following story: 'Unas víboras cascabeles, cuando están grandes y viejitas, se reducen a un tamaño muy chiquito. Luego dejan su piel y les crece la cabeza de águila. Se esconden, porque tarda mucho en crecerles las plumas. Al fin se vuelven águilas y suben al sol.'

The characteristics of the Rain Serpent

For a better understanding of the extensive symbolism of the Rain Serpent, I will present a text of the oral tradition in the region of Chalcatongo (Mixtec highlands), which sums up his characteristics as they are actually defined and known by the people.

Oral tradition of the Rain Serpent – a summary[4]

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[3] The cycle of the rain celebrations with invocation of the rain goes from April 25 (celebration of Saint Marcus) until May 15 (celebration of Saint Isidor the farm labourer). The most important days are May 1-3, when the communities and individuals celebrate rites and ceremonies in caves and on the mountain tops, expecting that the Rain Serpent in collaboration with other '*nahuales*' will bring the rain.

[4] The following text was not submitted to a textual revision, but written as it was recorded in the workshop session; it is presented here in its original Spanish version.

La serpiente vive en una laguna o en un '*tunchi*'.[5] Por eso no podemos vivir cerca de las lagunas. No debemos tratar mal a este animal para que no afecte nuestra casa. Hay personas que conocen una cierta manera cómo se saca a la serpiente: se echa sal o chile, para que se vaya el animal. El lugar donde ella vive, puede hacernos un mal. Si la laguna está cerca del pueblo se corre el peligro de que suceda algo malo allí, porque la serpiente puede vivir en esta laguna. Pero si hay una más lejos de la comunidad, la gente está contenta, ya que allí llega la serpiente para traernos la lluvia. Cuando hace mucho ruido (viento fuerte) y vienen las nubes negras, indica que viene la serpiente. De esto la gente se da cuenta. Hay algunas personas, que se dan cuenta en cual laguna la serpiente está, es decir, por donde llueve más seguido. Cuando se acerca el tiempo de lluvias y hace mucho ruído por causa de vientos fuertes, se dice que ya la serpiente está cambiando de lugar. De ésta misma serpiente se dice también que ella tiene plumas. Las plumas son pequeñas, de diferentes colores y brillan como el sol.

Dicen, que es bueno, que no pase la serpiente directamente por la comunidad, porque puede destruir la casa. Pero de todo modo la gente está contenta cuando se escucha la serpiente pasando por los cerros, puesto que va a llover.

Las serpientes de la lluvia se refugian en las lagunas, cuando el água es verde. No les gusta tanto ruido. Cuando hay mucho ruido o otras molestias que les causa disgusto, ellas provocan un remolino, o sea hacen que la laguna se vuelve un remolino de agua para atraer.

Todas las cosas de la serpiente de agua tiene mucha relación con Tilantongo. Entre Chalcatongo y Tilantongo va y viene la serpiente de água. Chalcatongo, se dice, tiene solamente una isla, en cambio Tilantongo tiene dos. No entendemos, por qué existe este intercambio. Lo conocemos a través de los sueños de los hombres *nahuales* que hacen el viaje hasta allá.

La serpiente de la lluvia siempre es *nahual*. Hay dos tipos de la serpiente de la lluvia: Una tiene solamente una cabeza (*Koo Sau, Koo Sa'vi*) y hay otra que es de siete cabezas (*Koo Uxia Xini*). Las dos son emplumadas. La de siete cabezas es la reina/el rey se puede decir. Esta serpiente nos trae 14 semillas para el mantenimiento. Las semillas estan dibujadas en sus plumas. Ella se prepara al principio de o a partir de medidados de Abril y llora como un becerro. Es decir, lloraba tan fuerte que de vez en cuando se movía toda la cienaga de Chalcatongo. Eso pasó hace años en Chalcatongo, cuando todavía estaba en la cienaga. Cuentan los abuelos que en la cienaga había una isla, donde estaban tres cruces y a donde iba el Padre a celebrar la misa el 3 de Mayo.

La serpiente de la lluvia siempre es *nahual* como también los rayos, relampagos, truenos, remolinos y diversos animales. Para traer la lluvia los *nahuales* de la serpiente de la lluvia, los rayos e truenos siempre andan en conjunto y colaboran como compañeros. Se dice que el hombre *nahual*, que es el rey de las serpientes o sea la serpiente de las siete cabezas, está marcado con un lunar negro y grande en la piel de su cuerpo. No sabemos en que parte de su cuerpo. Con las personas *nahuales* no se puede hacer chistes, es decir vaciladas, ya que se enojan aunque no dicen nada y luego su *nahual* nos detiene o nos hace algo. En el momento de la lluvia cuando está remoliando, no podemos hacer ninguna maldad a la serpiente, es decir poner chile, sal o relíquias en la lumbre, porque luego la serpiente nos devuelve la

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[5] The '*tunchi*' is a profound vertical cave in a mountain.

maldad. La gente dice que lo hace (remoliando) para que ella avance rápido. Pero en el avance, como es más fuerte la carrera, tumba las milpas o las arranca o a veces mata a los animales. Esto hace el remolino que la serpiente causa para poder viajar por el espacio.

Koo Sau, the Feathered Serpent

The Feathered Serpent normally begins to act in the rain season. In particular he brings the rain. Therefore he is named *Koo Sau,* which is translated as 'Rain Serpent '. Until today, rain itself is considered divine (*i'a sau*, 'Lord Rain') in the Mixteca. We may consider the rain as a manifestation of the divine power of the serpent; in other words *Koo Sau* is also the deity of rain. This aspect corresponds perfectly to what Codex Yuta Tnoho tells about Lord 9 Wind Quetzalcoatl: it is he who for the first time brings the celestial waters to the Mixtec lands. The Feathered Serpent controls and regulates the agrarian cycle in order to maintain the people.

It is also very important to notice that the Rain Serpent lives in the most profound places (lagoons and '*tunchis*'); from there he rises to heaven, generating strong movements and twisters and making a terrible noise (see also the movie *El Rebozo de mi Madre*). Obviously, the Feathered Serpent is the most significant creative force, which like a 'bundle of energy' (movement, twister, noise) makes use of all natural elements (air, water). In this way he unifies them, so that they contribute to life, that is, they produce the life of the plants, which are fundamental for the life of human beings. All this reminds us of the statement in Codex Yuta Tnoho that Lord 9 Wind Quetzalcoatl put on the attributes of the God of Wind.

Creativity and life are born from the 'most profound place', from the amorphous darkness where life does not exist and death reigns.

The plumes identify this serpent as a celestial being. They are signs of his power of transcendence, which transforms the whole immanent reality – the earth and terrestrial existence. In other words, they symbolize the intermediation with the divine. The plumes themselves are described as: '*plumitas finísimas de varios colores que brillan como el sol*'.

The fine and subtle aspect, together with the diversity of colours, reminds us of beauty, nobility and preciousness, that is, of art itself: the art of painting, the art of writing, music and poetry. Arts are the vehicles that communicate the clarity of the sun, that is the spiritual and divine light. Applied to human life, we can say that the 'artist' is the human archetype who realizes the life of transcendence. It is the man/woman with a heart of an artist who transforms the world.

The Rain Serpent and nahualism

The '*nahual*' is the focus point of Mesoamerican religious anthropology in general and of Mixtec religion in particular. We must distinguish between the '*nahual*' and the '*tona*'

of a person.[6] The '*tona*' refers to the historical destiny of the human individual determined by the day of birth (defined in former times by the sacred calendar of 260 days). We may call it the horizontal axis of human life. It sums up the character and to a certain extent determines his/her possibilities and fate.[7] The *nahual*, however, refers to the intimate relation between the human person and one or more animals or natural, i.e. divine, forces. This is the transcendental axis of human life. Passing beyond the limits of human existence by becoming a *nahual*, the human being may influence, transform and direct the cycle of nature. The transformation is experienced in dreams, but people consider it a reality. The human person finds him/herself in an intimate relation with nature and does not separate from her. This profound connection to the big 'game of the cosmos' forms a crucial part of his/her identity.

Nahual animals are: the coyote, the wildcat, the dog, the rabbit, the serpent etc. *Nahuales* consisting of natural forces are thunder, lightning, whirlwind and most notably the Rain Serpent or Feathered Serpent.[8] The *nahual* prefers to operate at night when the person is sleeping. Then Mixtec people say, '*nduu-de*', which means 'he becomes something' or 'he transforms himself'. The specific word in Sahin Sau, the Mixtec language, for '*nahual*' is *tuun*, the 'black' of a person. This refers to the spiritual relation between the person and an animal or a natural force / phenomenon, making the *nahual* part of personal identity. The *nahual* is an '*alter ego*'. This relation is very strong and intimate so that, if the *nahual* is seriously injured, the person becomes ill or dies.

Today it still happens (though not always) that people try to discover the *nahual* of a new-born child by looking at the presence of tracks or other signs left by the *nahual* animal around or in the house shortly after the birth. But frequently a person does not have any consciousness of his/her *nahual*, although it acts. It is also possible to discover the *nahual* by a dream that is repeated several times and can be interpreted as an action of the *nahual*.

In case the *nahual* has been injured and the person has fallen ill, it is the 'curandero' (indigenous religious specialist or shaman) who generally discovers the *nahual* of that person. Men or women who are conscious of their *nahual* may be able to control it to a certain extent. The human person can have more than one *nahual*, up to fourteen, which is the maximum, the complete number of *nahuales*. Only a small number of persons have all fourteen *nahuales*. But these persons are always conscious of them and control them: usually they are exceptional personalities and curanderos. Maybe we can conclude that in this case the *nahual* is really an instrument of magic-divine power. Anywa, it is important to recognize that the *nahual*-like 'alter ego' is part of the deepness of human

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[6] The explication of Michael D. Coe and Gordon Whittaker (1982:32-33) is very clear on this point.

[7] From my point of view, this refers to the experience of human life that our way of life become every day, step by step more determinate and finally must be lived in his ultimate consequences.

[8] There also exists a *nahual* named '*nahual del mal*' which is, as people say, similar to a vampire. It is said to suck blood and sometimes to kill small children.

existence. To achieve the divine-magic power that the *nahual* represents, or, in other words, to enter in contact with the inner reality of human beings, means to open oneself to transcendence and spiritual transformation by the forces living there. The persons of fourteen *nahuales* have integrated all interior forces and possess full magic-divine power. They are spiritually complete people, true intermediators between the human and the divine. This is expressed also in the number 14, which is composed of two times seven. The number 7, in turn, generally has the symbolic meaning of 'abundance' and integrated life, combining the three layers of the universe with the four cardinal points.

Summarizing, we conclude that the term '*nahual*' stands for a specific Mixtec anthropological concept, in which the human being plays the chief part, finds his transcendental axis and lives in a reciprocal relation to the world, without feeling himself superior to nature.

The Feathered Serpent as 'nahual'

Now it is possible to understand the meaning of the fact that the Feathered Serpent or Rain Serpent is always a *nahual*. This refers to the inner relation between a human person and a mythic-divine being/phenomenon. It is the 'alter ego', that is, it forms part of the soul and the identity of the person. There are many Feathered Serpents that are the *nahuales* of different persons, men and women. The role of this *nahual* is assumed in adulthood. It requires consciousness of personal life, because it is necessary to dispose consciously of the divine-magic power of creating rain, which produces life for the people and for nature. This involves a real 'ministry' to be beneficial for the life of the people and the entire cosmos. The 'ministry' as a spiritual service includes the disposition to suffer because of people what the *nahual* does and what happens to it. For the Mixtecs it is obviously not a pleasant thing to have the Feathered Serpent as *nahual*, particularly in the rainy season when the serpent must carry out many acts.

It is important to note that the Feathered Serpent alone does not possess sufficient power to bring the rain. He needs the cooperation of other *nahuales* such as lightning and thunder. It is a collective of *nahuales* that brings the rain. The divine-magic power is distributed among them. The power of every *nahual* is completed by the collaboration of all the others, which share the task of bringing the rain. In this context we must mention the fact that the *nahuales* of the rain always work together as couples of *nahuales*: the male lightning and the female lightning; the male thunder and the female thunder; the male Feathered Serpent and the female Feathered Serpent. The divine power exists only in duality and in complementarity. Since ancient times the divine mystery was known in Mesoamerica as God Mother and God Father, who formed a complementary duality.

According to contemporary belief, all rain *nahuales* hold an assembly during which they discuss and coordinate their tasks and proceedings. Apparentl, this means that the divine-magic power resides in the community of the *nahuales*. They are able to act for the benefit of life of the people and to unify the cosmic forces by their assembly, that

is, by their community. In my opinion, we have here a divine-normative model for the social life of the Mixtec people. It gives origin to a communitarian ethic, which has as most important values: the 'ministry' or service, the division and complementarity of power, the collaboration and the community herself, that is, the assembly which makes possible the maintenance and the transformation of the world.

What is the role played by the Feathered Serpent of Seven Heads in this complex of magic-divine powers? Apparently his nature differs from that of the other Feathered Serpents. He is unique and, according to contemporary oral tradition, commands the other *nahuales* of the rain. This serpent is the king or the *cacique* of the *nahuales*. It is the most excellent deity of intermediation, which possesses full power and plays a dominant role in the questions of life and death for the Mixtec people. But, in spite of this supreme importance, he shares his power with the community of *nahuales*. That means a real participation of the other *nahuales* in his magic-divine power. It is very interesting that the man whose *nahual* is the Feathered Serpent of Seven Heads, is unknown. Only one fact is known about him: he has a big mark on his back, that is, the Mongolian mark (called *tuun*, 'the black'). This man represents the divine-human intermediator: the man and god 9 Wind Quetzalcoatl who still exists incognito in the Mixtec communities.

The Feathered Rain Serpent in oral tradition

In the following pages I will present and interpret a well-known story about the Feathered Serpent or Rain Serpent, trying to identify other aspects that complete the image of the Feathered Serpent that we have constructed so far.

The Feathered Serpent saves an abandoned infant.

> Había una pareja que tenía un bebé. Pero no pudieron mantenerlo. Entonces los papás le dejaron donde estaba un hormiguero, donde había muchas hormigas de las que pican fuertemente. Por eso alunos señores se dieron cuenta que el niño estaba gritando. Lo recogieron y lo llevaron a su casa. Pero sus papás ya no lo querían y volvieron a dejarlo en un lugar, donde había animales, para que lo comieran. Una vez más algunos señores lo devolvieron a su casa. Por último los papás le metieron en un 'tunchi' y dijeron: 'Aquí no va a salir, aquí va a morir.' Pero el nene tenía suerte, porque, cuando llegó dentro del 'tunchi' la serpiente estaba allí. Y ella le dijo: 'No llores! Voy a cuidarte.' Entonces allá estuvo un tiempo con la serpiente. Y la serpiente salió a buscar para que comieran y para almacenarlo todo. Pues ella decía que iba a haber un tiempo en que no encontrarían nada. Allí estaba el niño con la serpiente y fue creciendo. Ella lo mantenía. Ella llevaba las cosas para que comiera.
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> Cuando el niño era más grandecito, la serpiente le dijo: 'Ya casi llega el tiempo de que me vaya. Te voy a sacar de aquí. No llores! No te voy a dejar en cualquier pueblo pobre, sino a donde yo te voy a llevar, es la ciudad. Allí en la ciudad, cuando tú te bajes, vas a arrancar dos de mis plumas, nada más. Y vas a ver cuanta más gente va a querer esas plumas. Van a querer comprarlas y van a querer que te vayas con ellos. Pero a esta gente no se le vas a dar. Si sale una pareja, que no tiene hijos y te va a criar como hijo, a estas personas les das las dos plumas. Ellos van a ser tus papás.

Además la serpiente le dijo al niño, que debían dejar las dos plumas en el altar de la casa y adorarlas. Y de allí no les iba a faltar nada ni a él ni a sus papás adoptivos, porque iban a ser muy ricos. Y así fue. La serpiente se lo llevó pues. Cuando ella se salió, dijo: 'Agárrate fuerte, porque el movimiento va a ser feo! Y va a llegar un aire fuerte. No tengas miedo!' Entonces se fue con el niño a la ciudad. 'Cuando te bajes', dijo, 'vas a ver lo que yo te dije.' Ya cuando el niño bajó, había mucha gente y querían comprar las plumas. Otros dijeron: 'Regálamelas! Vente conmigo a mi casa!' Y él hizo lo que la serpiente le dijo y les decía: 'No me voy. No las vendo.' Entonces llegó una pareja que le dijo que le iban a recoger como hijo. A ésta pareja el niño le dio las plumas. Allí con ellos creció bien.

Cuando era grande, se acordó de donde se vino y le dijeron quienes eran sus papás verdaderos. Fue a visitarlos y les dijo: 'Aquí estoy. Ustedes querían que yo muriera. Pero no! Hubo alguien, quien me salvó. Ahorita estoy feliz. Tengo todo lo que quiero. No me falta nada. Solamente vine a saludarlos. Ya me voy con mis verdaderos papás, que me criaron.' Y de allí se fue.

Commentary and interpretation

References to city-life in this narration suggest that it was composed in recent times, while, on the other hand, it contains several traditional symbols related to the feathered Rain Serpent. Most likely, the story reflects the actual situation of the Mixtec people. We try to show this submitting the text to a symbolic interpretation with a sociocultural perspective.

During the last thirty years economic, social and cultural problems and difficulties have aggravated in the Mixtec Highlands as well as in other indigenous regions of Mexico. There are many reasons for that, but we should mention: the progressive erosion and the lack of agronomic assistance, the considerable growth of the population, the social tensions between rich and poor, the latent and sometimes barefaced racism of Latin-American societies, the cultural change of modern life introduced by school education and the insulting attitude of school teachers in relation to the existent indigenous culture. Consequently, Mixtecs and other indigenous nations are suffering from a continuous cultural 'invasion' of the Western (capitalist-industrial-urban) way of life. Many people are forced to leave their land and to migrate to the cities. Their precious land ('*tierra querida*') cannot sustain the indigenous population any longer, and this should be understood in an integral sense (economic, social, cultural). Thousands of indigenous men and women cannot continue to follow their own sociocultural paradigm, inherited from a venerable millenarian tradition. This whole situation is a very hard and traumatic experience for many Mixtecs and other indigenous people.

Exactly this is expressed in the narration when the parents abandon their infant. The parents may be interpreted as the symbolic representation of the sociocultural and economic paradigm transmitted by the ancestors. They also represent symbolically the ways of socialization, which were made possible by education in this paradigm. The

abandonment of the infant is the symbol of the impossibility to socialize the young generation in the traditional cultural paradigm by assuming the pattern of culture lived by their parents and ancestors, finding their Mixtec identity this way.

In the narration the infant is brought three times back to the mountain to die. This means that the inherited tradition, represented by the parents, condemns the new Mixtec generation to die, that is, there really exists the danger of the loss of Mixtec identity. Here we should remember that the feeling to be condemned to die and to loose cultural identity is in some cases so real that it has produced among different Native American tribes and peoples the phenomenon of frequent suicide. In this situation, the feathered Rain Serpent adopts the child and nurtures it like a mother or a father. Here we find the geniality of the whole narration. The Mixtec identity can survive because it does not reside in the historical cultural paradigm, but in the religious archetype, which is the Feathered Serpent. This distinction between the cultural paradigm that continues alive in tradition and the religious archetype that metaphysically determines the Mixtec identity, is fundamental. In a situation of sociocultural disorientation and economic oppression with their consequences such as the abandonment of the 'tierra querida', the migration to the big cities and the violent cultural change, it is the religious archetype that maintains the cultural identity and nurtures it.

Remembering the importance of duality in the Mesoamerican worldview, we may interpret the two plumes given by the serpent as a reference to the transcendence, to the divine and to the affirmation of identity. They are a symbol of the precious integrated, complete life and also of a new origin and life force. This implies the possibility to 'inculturate' effectively in city-life and modern culture. It is necessary to develop a sociocultural paradigm that at the same time can be adapted to the demands of modernity and be coupled with the religious archetype and the specific Mixtec identity. This is expressed in the narration when the child is waiting for parents who accept him like a son and not like something that can be exploited. Nevertheless, there exists the danger or the temptation to 'sell' the own identity to an inadequate sociocultural reality. This may happen because someone is looking for fast results or success without patience, which is not one of the virtues of modern life. This is represented in the narration when some people wish to buy the plumes. Still, in the cultural pluralism of the city a space may be found to develop a modern Mixtec culture: the child growth up with his new parents and is socialized in city-life. That means the possibility of 'inculturation' of Mixtec culture and religion in modernity. The new Mixtec of the city or the modern Mixtec is free from tradition. He possesses a proper Mixtec identity, independent of the ancient cultural paradigm. Therefore in the end the young man returns to the city and stays there.

The narration further makes a crucial statement about the Feathered Serpent as a symbol of Mesoamerican religious life. As it admits the possibility of adaptation to a completely different sociocultural environment, the 'religion of the Feathered Serpent' abandons the tribalism/regionalism and opens itself to universality.

Conclusions and perspectives

The steps I have made in this short essay, have shown that a real continuity exists between the precolonial Mixtec religion and the oral religious tradition of the present. Starting from this observation we may distinguish three important challenges for the anthropology and archaeology of Mesoamerica.

1. I have tried to show that actual oral tradition conserves with fidelity the millenarian Mixtec tradition of Lord 9 Wind Quetzalcoatl and the related vision about the transcendent. It seems to me very difficult to understand the contents of Mixtec Codices without any knowledge of the contemporary oral tradition, its histories and narrations. Acquiring this knowledge should be a fundamental aspect of archaeological research.

2. If cultural anthropology aims at a true understanding of the culture that it is investigating, it should find a holistic perspective, which permits to apprehend a culture like a 'whole', that is, something complete and entire. Religious symbols, such as *Koo Sau*, the feathered Rain Serpent, reflect the different formative and normative ideas of the culture as a whole. Therefore it is necessary that the investigator of Mixtec culture familiarizes himself thoroughly with the religious vision and traditions of the Mixtec people.

3. As I tried to demonstrate in this article, the field of investigating the religious tradition in Mixtec history and society is very wide, but decisive for the comprehension of Mixtec culture. Therefore it seems to me very important that the responsible institutes and faculties stimulate anthropological and archaeological studies of profound themes such as the immediate divine presence experienced by Mixtec people in daily life.

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Karlos Tachisavi

Hacia una Poética Ñuu Savi

> *¿Cómo se debe atravesar esa pared? Carece de utilidad golpear fuerte, por lo que se debe minar esa pared y atravesarla con la lima, y a mi entender, despacio y con paciencia* (Vincent Van Gogh, *Cartas a Théo*).

México es un país subdesarrollado tanto en lo económico como en lo político. En lo económico, depende de economías poderosas como la de su vecino del norte, los Estados Unidos de América. En lo político, no tiene un sistema democrático, basta señalar los gobiernos después de la llamada Revolución Mexicana de 1910 hasta el año 2000, el gobierno de un sólo partido político, la dictadura perfecta como lo definió acertadamente el escritor Mario Vargas Llosa. Los sexenios siguientes hasta ahora no han producido una disyunción fundamental con esta tradición.

Podemos entender la historia mexicana, si partimos de lo que conocemos como Mesoamérica, milenio y medio antes de Cristo hasta el siglo XVI de nuestra era, que fue interrumpido por la invasión española y con ella el inicio de la Colonia -que duró trescientos años-, que culminó con el movimiento de independencia, continuó la Reforma y luego una dictadura de 30 años que terminó con el inicio de un movimiento social llamado Revolución, así, hasta nuestros días. Del periodo Mesoamericano todavía existen más de 60 Pueblos Originarios con su historia, filosofía, lengua y cultura, los Ñuu Savi son uno de estos y están asentados en el sureste de México.

La situación de subdesarrollo económico y político del país, se refleja en el Estado de Oaxaca, lugar donde se encuentra la mayor parte del territorio Ñuu Savi. En este territorio existen los más altos índices de marginalidad social y analfabetismo en México, como consecuencia de un modelo social corrupto y de inmovilidad política.

En el periodo Mesoamericano, Tu'un Savi, 'Palabra de la Lluvia' (lengua mixteca), era oral y su escritura ideográfica y pictográfica, desde la llamada ñuiñe, en piedras, huesos y cerámica hasta los códices en piel de venado. Con el inicio de la colonia, las órdenes religiosas y encomenderos obligaron a los Ñuu Savi a utilizar su escritura para la elaboración de códices, mapas y lienzos; la razón era el conocimiento de la realidad para facilitar su imposición. Así, la característica principal de este periodo fue la destrucción de la filosofía y las artes Ñuu Savi, se impuso la lengua castellana y la religión católica. Posteriormente vendría la Independencia y la Reforma que no produjeron cambios, pues

continuó el mismo sistema de explotación, luego la llamada revolución mexicana que generó una política educativa y social que obligó la castellanización escrita y hablada, lo cual ahondó el racismo y la discriminación hacia los Pueblos Originarios que no encuadraban en lo llamado 'nacional'. Situación que continúa profundizándose hasta nuestros días.

Actualmente, Tu'un Savi se encuentra en una etapa de recuperación, su escritura se lleva a cabo con el alfabeto latino. Para esto ha sido importante el esfuerzo de los propios Ñuu Savi, entre ellos, Ve'e Tu'un Savi (Academia de la lengua mixteca) una organización que tiene como principales objetivos: el desarrollo de la lengua y su reapropiación a través de la enseñanza a nivel escolar. En el mismo objetivo, es necesario señalar las investigaciones de Aurora Gabina Pérez Jiménez quién en su *Sahìn Sàu, curso de lengua mixteca* hace propuestas para el desarrollo de Tu'un Savi. Además, existen escritos de instituciones como el Centro de Investigaciones y Estudios Superiores en Antropología Social (CIESAS), Instituto Lingüístico de Verano (ILV), Consejo Nacional para las Cultura y las Artes (CONACULTA), Escuela Nacional de Antropología e Historia (ENAH), Instituto Nacional de Antropología e Historia (INAH), el extinto Instituto Nacional Indigenista (INI), así como varios escritos de especialistas de Estados Unidos de América, Holanda y Ñuu Savi, estos escritos pertenecen en su mayoría a diferentes campos del conocimiento humano, como son: arqueología, historia, antropología, religión, lingüística, etc.

La fase en la que se encuentra Tu'un Savi no es ajena a la situación social. Lengua y sociedad tienen una relación dialéctica, un proceso histórico conjunto del hombre y su expresión; una interrelación compleja, donde los factores sociales suelen determinar la práctica o el desuso de una lengua. Por ello decimos que la escritura Ñuu Savi está interrumpida. Considero importante señalar el papel de los movimientos sociales e indígenas, especialmente la del Ejército Zapatista de Liberación Nacional (EZLN) quien desde 1994, mantiene presencia nacional e internacional y tienen como premisa la autonomía y autodeterminación de los Pueblos Originarios, propuesta que es integral e incluyente.

Con relación a los textos literarios producidos, casi todos están escritos en lengua castellana, y muy pocos en Tu'un Savi, en este caso, existe dificultad en su lectura por la cuestión de las variantes. Se conocen trabajos importantes como dos textos de principio del siglo pasado, de y sobre los Ñuu Savi, el primero, por parte de Manuel Martínez Gracida y Mariano López Ruiz quienes en su *Ita Andehui, leyenda mixteca*, hablan de la grandeza Ñuu Savi, este escrito es una novela que como su género indica, está entre la historia y la ficción; el segundo, *El rey Iukano y los hombres de oriente* de Abraham Castellanos, hace una interpretación lírica del códice Nacuaa I (Colombino) y trata de enaltecer el espíritu Ñuu Savi. Hoy, tenemos investigaciones y creaciones del Dr. Maarten Jansen cuyos libros son destacables y básicos en cuando a su visión histórica y literaria sobre los Ñuu Savi. Adicionalmente, hay varios textos publicados en diversos medios que han privilegiado la poesía y la narrativa, pero la esencia de éstos no explican

la cosmogonía Ñuu Savi, no llegan a la profundidad de la historia, su búsqueda es lo inmediato, no hay riesgo ni se hace explosión de la palabra, existen pocos atrevimientos a los juegos y sonidos, ritmos e imágenes, a lo real y lo mágico. La poesía es de corte sentimental, de un yoísmo lírico, coloquial, confesional, a veces tendiente a panfleto, no hay apropiación de nuestros códices, se escribe con las primeras impresiones al abrir los ojos; no se construyen los poemas como señalaba Horacio en su *Ars Poética* 'Condenad todo poema que no ha sido depurado por muchos días de corrección'. En situación similar se encuentra la narrativa con su tradición oral, leyenda o cuentos que son los más socorridos. En ambos géneros, no se ven las huellas de la invasión europea ni la miseria actual. No se escribe desde adentro con la conciencia del naufragio.

La poética tiene que responder a las condiciones objetivas de miseria social actual, nos encontramos en la noche, en la oscuridad, por lo tanto el canto poético debe ser distinto. Nuestras representaciones de las fuerzas naturales están aquí junto a nosotros, dándonos los ciclos, la vida y la muerte, el sol y la luna o el día y la noche. La esencia de la religiosidad y la filosofía permanecen en distintas formas y prácticas cotidianas de nuestros días. Pero estamos en un mundo que se derrumba.

En el periodo Mesoamericano el arte se entendía como una totalidad, rito y ceremonia, comunión entre lo terrenal y lo humano, cuerpo y naturaleza, por lo tanto, la escritura se concebía dentro de este contexto. Creo que hoy, los Ñuu Savi estamos en la etapa de apropiarnos de lo ceremonial y ritual, de interiorizar y exteriorizar nuestra lengua y cultura, hacer de la poética un espacio dialógico con poemas en crisis de forma y contenido. La difícil orografía debe crear una literatura que permita la conservación de variantes y de usos y costumbres, como una muestra de la esencia y riqueza Ñuu Savi. Nos encontramos en un periodo de búsqueda de géneros de la literatura como son: poesía, narrativa, ensayo, dramaturgia, etc. y sus combinaciones. Esto puede dar multiplicidad de interpretaciones para expresar la conciencia infeliz y mostrar las capacidades de Tu'un Savi, una lengua tan poderosa como cualquier otra en el mundo. Los catalanes dicen que su mejor literatura se dio desde las catacumbas, en la dictadura de Francisco Franco. La literatura se produce en la carencia, ausencia de territorio y orfandad.

Los Ñuu Savi tenemos que retomar nuestro camino, buscar un estilo, elaborar una arqueología de la escritura, una presencia y textos a nivel nación, país y universo, buscar nuestro ritmo en el silencio y la soledad, si la noche pare al día y éste a la noche, esta lucha del jaguar y del águila debe parir literatura, nuestro bilingüismo es una capacidad a favor; para ello son necesarias las influencias literarias, el conocimiento de la tradición latinoamericana y europea, las vanguardias y los ismos. Pero sobre todo, no aislarse, hablar con otras lenguas indígenas y lenguas universales, crear neologismos, ritmos y sonidos, el rejuego de las estructuras métricas y, sobre todo, entender la no-trascendencia del humano, lo que debe trascender es su creación. Los códices ahí están resistiendo el tiempo, la prueba del arte.

Sobre esto, José Carlos Mariátegui en sus *Siete ensayos de interpretación de la realidad peruana* señala el camino que sigue un literatura que 'comienza', dice: 'El proceso

normal de la literatura de un pueblo distingue en él tres periodos: un periodo colonial, un periodo cosmopolita, un periodo nacional. Durante el primer periodo un pueblo, literariamente, no es sino una colonia, una dependencia de otro. Durante el segundo periodo, asimila simultáneamente elementos de diversas literaturas extranjeras. En el tercero, alcanzan una expresión bien modulada su propia personalidad y su propio sentimiento'.

En este sentido, mi propuesta poética no es una continuación de la política educativa nacional para des-indianizarnos, sino la búsqueda permanente de la identidad Ñuu Savi a través del verbo. Para esto, hay que efectuar vuelos sobre nuestros centros ceremoniales para sentir su poder y recoger nuestras huellas, hacer de nuestra vagancia por los cuatro puntos cardinales Ñuu Savi y del planeta una catarsis. Por lo tanto, habrá que redefinir los nombres de las representaciones de las fuerzas terrenales que han perdido su significado y su ser, hablar de todo, con la fuerza de las imágenes. Amar a Tu'un Savi es buscar nuestra voz, trabajarla como se teje en el telar de cintura, como el amor al barro de nuestra carne, caminar hermanados de la belleza de Tata, Nana, Jie'e, Yuu, Savi, Yuku, Nute, Nkanii, Yoo, Koo, Ñu'u, Xita, Tee, Ña'a, Ñani, Ku'va, Tonii. Esto significa, acercarnos a nuestros abuelos y montañas que conservan las palabras y pensamientos de generaciones, el respeto al sol y a la tierra como madre donde el hombre camina, vive y muere.

Es necesario señalar que Tu'un Savi pertenece a un todo social, no es aislado, tiene que ver con el planeta, con las lenguas minoritarias del mundo. No olvidemos que intentamos forjar una nación, con su identidad e inserción nacional e internacional, por ello, aunado al desarrollo de la escritura, se deben entender las ciencias como las matemáticas, la biología, la computación, etc., así también las artes: danza, música, pintura, cine, fotografía, teatro, escultura, etc. Ahora conviene citar al escritor Ernesto Sábato cuando en *El escritor y sus fantasmas* habla del arte nacional: 'La clave no ha de ser buscada ni en el folklore ni en el nacionalismo de los temas y vestimentas: hay que buscarla en la profundidad'.

Si el mundo atraviesa por un neoliberalismo económico, esto incluye la lengua, el inglés como ejemplo de *lingua franca*. Vivimos una época de erosión del atlas lingüístico y 'revolución del lenguaje' como señala George Steiner.

Para concluir, permítaseme presentar un texto que ejemplifica el fracaso y la insistencia de una voz:

> tisia, koo / *ay la serpiente,*
> nxinikoo nu'u inii / *me regresó a su estómago*
> je ninimanidani na'adani ay / *y cedimos las manos,*
> kuee kuee nanava nchinuu yata tikatun / *ojo y paciencia saltaron el nudo,*
> kuneio-stakao/ichika tuku / *re-sistir/tomar*
> ntutúvi tee ya'a. / *la derrota no aquí.*
> iin kit+ tajii nigjiaa / *un caballo me entrega sus zapatos*
> jitaa iin yaa ntukuka'nu inini, / *con la ópera inimitable entre sus dientes,*

sunika ta'nu tu'un vii / *aunque sea un verso fracturado*
kajie'e, kajie'eo. / *comenzar aunque sea.*
vei tuni da y+k+ yata, / *pesa todo, cada combinación de la espalda*
soma teeo uni xitin da i / *pero las is tienen tres narices*
sava kene tachiyu'u ne inii / *cuando rompe la voz su adentro*

Entiendo por poética Ñuu Savi: espíritu y creación literaria en Tu'un Savi, ya sea en prosa o en verso, un recorrido con los sentidos y el verbo, es decir, crítica de la historia y del lenguaje, y, cuyas palabras claves son: *retomar* y *resistir*.

Institutions and e-mail addresses of the contributors

Prof. Dr. Juan José Batalla Rosado (Departamento de Historia de América II, Universidad Complutense, Madrid, Spain): batalla@ghis.ucm.es

Dr. Gerardo Gutiérrrez Mendoza (Centro de Investigaciones y Estudios Superiores en Antropología Social, Mexico City, Mexico): gxg153@hotmail.com

Dr. Gilda Hernández Sánchez (Faculty of Archaeology, Leiden University, The Netherlands): g.h.sanchez@arch.leidenuniv.nl

Itandehui E.E. Jansen, PhD cand. (Department of Literature Studies, Leiden University, The Netherlands): itandehui_jansen@yahoo.com

Prof. Dr. Maarten E.R.G.N. Jansen (Faculty of Archaeology, Leiden University, The Netherlands): m.jansen@arch.leidenuniv.nl

Dr. Arthur A. Joyce (Department of Anthropology, University of Colorado, Boulder, USA): Arthur.Joyce@Colorado.EDU

Prof. Dr. Rosemary Joyce (Department of Anthropology, University of California, Berkeley, USA): rajoyce@berkeley.edu

Juan Julián Caballero, PhD cand. (Centro de Investigaciones y Estudios Superiores en Antropología Social, Oaxaca Oax., Mexico): jjulian@ciesas.edu.mx

Ubaldo López García, PhD cand. (Escuela Normal Experimental, Teposcolula Oax., Mexico & Departamento de Formación y Actualización de Docentes del Instituto Estatal de Educación Pública de Oaxaca, Oaxaca Oax., Mexico): ubaldolopezgarcia@hotmail.com

Mrs. Gabina Aurora Pérez Jiménez (Faculty of Archaeology, Leiden University, The Netherlands): g.a.perez@arch.leidenuniv.nl

Lic. Angel Iván Rivera Guzmán (Dirección de Registro Público de Monumentos y Zonas Arqueológicos, Instituto Nacional de Antropología e Historia, Mexico City, Mexico): angelivanrivera@yahoo.com.mx / ivanriguz@hotmail.com

Dr. María de los Angeles Romero Frizzi (Centro Oaxaca, Instituto Nacional de Antropología e Historia, Oaxaca Oax., Mexico): romerofrizzi@prodigy.net.mx / romerofrizzi@hotmail.com

Lic. Roberto C. Santos Pérez (Archivo Histórico Municipal, Tlaxiaco Oax., Mexico): robertosanper@yahoo.com

Prof. Dr. Ronald Spores (Teposcolula Project; P.O.B. 1474, DePoe Bay, Oregon 97341-1474 USA): kishron@centurytel.net / ronoaxaca@hotmail.com

Michael Swanton, PhD cand. (Faculty of Archaeology, Leiden University, The Netherlands & Biblioteca Burgoa, Universidad Autónoma Benito Juárez de Oaxaca, Oaxaca Oax., Mexico): mwswanton@yahoo.com

Karlos Tachisavi (Ñuu Savi poet, Mexico): tachisavi@hotmail.com

Franci Taylor, PhD cand. (Faculty of Archaeology, Leiden University, The Netherlands): francitaylor@hotmail.com

Dr. Javier Urcid (Department of Anthropology, Brandeis University, USA): urcid@brandeis.edu

Dr. Laura N.K. van Broekhoven (National Museum of Ethnology and Faculty of Archaeology, Leiden, The Netherlands): laurab@volkenkunde.nl

Dr. Peter Verstraten (Department of Literature Studies, Leiden University, The Netherlands): p.w.j.verstraten@umail.leidenuniv.nl

Hanns-Jörg Witter, PhD cand. (Faculty of Archaeology, Leiden University, The Netherlands): hvdwitter@web.de